NEWS / A4
Money flowed in Congress to OK Pagcor bid

WORLD / A26
Paris Hilton begins 3-week jail term for violating probation

ENTERTAINMENT / F1
Johnny Depp, 'Pirates' win popcorn prize at MTV Movie Awards

NEWS / A20
Manila Mayor-elect Alfredo Lim reopens Arroceros Park to public

NEWS / B9
Japan agency ups RP credit rating from 'stable' to 'positive'

Pichay bows out; vows to bounce back in 2010

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATORIAL campaign might have cost Nova Anglo senatorial Prospero "Butch" Pichay the 2007 election, but a powder keg...

PHOTOS, A12

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, June 6, 2007 44 Pages / Vol. 22 / No. 178 P18 www.inquirer.net

GMA in Fatima thanks Our Lady for Mike A cure

By John Liston Lorenzo

LISBON (via PLDT) — PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday became the first Philippine leader to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, lighting a candle and praying at the site where 90 years ago the Virgin Mary appeared before three children.

STORY, A12

Spy chief snubs Jonas hearing

Missing activist, media icon shared passion for farming

By Fe Zamora

THE MISSING FARMER ACTIVIST Jonas Joseph Burgos enjoyed the support of the person he admired most—his father, the late press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos Jr.

The martial administration dated back to the 1970s when Joe Burgos was running guling publisher of the hard-hitting tabloid We Forum and Jonas was one of its "newsboys," his mother, Edita, told the Inquirer.

"Joe was not only proud of Jonas' work as an agriculturist; he also respected his aim," she said.

By Edita's account, Jonas had been

PHOTOS, A-10

Isafp chief no-show again in CHR probe

By Yolanda Quinones

NOT ONLY WAS THE CHIEF OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERvice of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) a no-show for the second time at the Commission on Human Rights' public inquiry yesterday into Jonas Burgos' disappearance, his lawyer also refused to take part in the hearing.

CHR Chair Purificacion Quisumbing chided Maj. Antonio Apostol, who was representing Isafp chief Maj. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, who the lawyers questioned the legality of the proceedings.

"We will note that you have a certain predilection to be non-cooperative," scrupulously assessed Quisumbing told Apostol after he declined to take the "solemn oath."

Apostol, who heads Isafp's legal affairs, answered in the affirmative when asked by Quisumbing if he was "objecting" to the proceedings.

He argued that the hearing was futile

STORY, A-10

PRESIDENT ARROYO MAKES HISTORY as the first Filipino leader to make a pilgrimage to Fatima, Portugal. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is in front of the Basilica of Our Lady of Fatima where she was given a Cross of the apparition site.

DANCES WITH TREES: Professor Grace Odal-Devora of the University of the Philippines celebrates World Environment Day at the Angat pool (part of Napi) and Bulacan's forest basin. The celebration coincides with the launch of the "Run for Life (RFL) leading for Planting," a project that aims to surpass last year's Green Philippine Highway's planting of 100,000 trees.

Volunteers to plant 20-M trees

By Tilly Bersales and Tina G. Santos

"ONE SCHOOL DAY, OUR TEACHER asked us to draw a picture of the environment. I drew the sky and around it gray. Then I drew an ocean and tree mountains, and colored them brown," Jhon Angel, young student in Mikaela de Leon's sale.

"Then, my teacher said, 'The sky should be light blue, the sea should be navy blue, and the mountains should be green because there are forests. She also asked, 'What are those things floating on the water?' They do not look like fish."

The grade schooler said she politely told her teacher: "That's how the forest looked like when you were young. But today, there are few trees on the dry mountains. The air is filled with smoke and dust. Garbage exists in the oceans instead of fish."

But, she said, thanks to the proposition of the "Trees for Life" project, Philippines "may have a beautiful world to enjoy for the future."

De Leon released her tale as yesterday's launch of the joint project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Green Army Foundation

PHILIPPINE NEWS, A-10

FIXING EDUCATION FLAWS

New subsidy plan perils rural private high schools

By Fernando del Mundo

(See Yellow pages)

OFFICIALS OF PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS in the provinces fear their days are numbered.

Concern comes on a government move to phase out the Educational Service Contracting (ESC) program launched not with private high schools in the 1980s to help poor elementary graduates.

The ESC will then be replaced by the Educational Voucher System (EVS), if the Department of Education overcomes objections by private schools mainly run by the Catholic Church and religious groups.

Touted last year, the EVS will politicize the program and further erode the already dismal situation in Philippine education, critics say.

The ESC and EVS differ in the selection of schools and student recipients. In effect, the EVS will do away with the screening mechanism in place for almost a quarter of a century and lead to the demise of the so-called "mendiko" private high schools.

In a full page newspaper ad taken out last month, the Davao Association of Colleges and Schools and the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations in Region 11 (Coordcopa-Mindanao) opposed the President Macapagal-Arroyo's move to revise the ESC guidelines for the beneficiaries coming from 400,000 families nationwide.

The ESC conditions "do not only dis-

NEWS, A-20

T-TEAM *Report*

Group to tap people power to push reforms

By Tarra Quismundo

FRUSTRATED BY UNFULFILLED promises of education reforms, an opposition bloc out of the "Hello Garci" turbulence two years ago is aiming to harness people power to fix schools, restore teachers and help the Filipino student learn more.

The International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (ICI-Filsco) is seeking to socialize a presidential commitment that will maximize democracy in revitalizing the education system.

Convened in a lobby and waiting bloc, the nongovernment organization composed of former government officials and academicians is consolidating partnerships in ways administration to pursue reforms, support and install leaders committed to the process and make them accountable.

"We see certain areas, identify certain goals, but you build a system one at a time to ensure the reforms that says we

GROUP, A20

Roxas warns: JPEPA safety nets needed

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THOUSANDS OF FILIPINO WORKERS IN THE... terms making garments and electric appliances, and assembling automobiles stand to lose their jobs if the government implements an economic deal with Japan without putting safety nets in place.

Sen. Manuel A. Roxas II issued the warning after President Macapagal-Arroyo pressed an

BUSINESS, A-26

15 Liberals back Garcia bid for speakership

By Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra

EIGHT CONGRESSMEN-ELECT Pablo Garcia has secured the support of a bloc of 15 Liberal Party lawmakers in his bid to topple Speaker Jose de Venecia, a ranking Cabinet official said yesterday.

Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III said the 15 LP representatives elected in the incoming 14th Congress would present a common front when the speakership issue came to a vote.

"We are going to vote this week to put a decision on the matter. We have already decided that we will vote as a bloc. My majority of the members of [the] we are inclined to support Garcia," Tañada said in an interview on the other day.

"Garcia is more acceptable. For instance, on the issue of Cha-cha, he believes that it over there will be Cha-cha change, it should be through a constitutional convention," added Tañada, a member of the national executive council of the mainstream LP under the leadership of Senate President Franklin Drilon.

Tañada said the LP had adopted

SPEAK EASY

DE VENECIA: Some resign but not GMA out.

GARCIA: Chamber, not Charter, change.

the same position on Cha-cha.

Earlier, Drilon declared his support for Garcia, stating in Cebu City that he admired Garcia's independent stance on several issues, even if he was an Arroyo ally.

One of those issues, Drilon said, was the administration's move for Cha-cha. The Constitution through people's initiative, which Garcia opposed.

This is why he believes Garcia will not be a puppet of the administration, Drilon said.

He said the LP's House contingent

13 LIBERALS, A12

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WEATHER FORECAST

"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH"

DAR chief calls in Negros troops

By TJ Burgonio

AGRARIAN REFORM secretary Nasser Pangandaman yesterday condemned the killing of two land reform beneficiaries and the wounding of six other farmers in a sugar plantation in Negros Occidental and asked police and military authorities to send more troops to the contested Hacienda Velez-Malaga.

In a strongly worded statement, Pangandaman said the farmers had every right to occupy the property since it was already awarded to them. He ordered the Department of Agrarian Reform's legal office to assist the families of the victims in the filing of charges and to "do its best to bring all the perpetrators to justice."

The two farmers gunned down by security guards of the hacienda were among 67 of some 146 beneficiaries of a land grant under the government's agrarian reform program who Pangandaman said potentially installed last March, nine months after they staged a hunger strike in front of his office.

Pangandaman also warned that "heads would roll" in the provincial DAR office if he found that they had delayed the survey he ordered to determine the boundary of the land granted to the farmer beneficiaries.

HAWAJAO FARMERS display photos of the attack which killed two farmer-beneficiaries of Hacienda Velez-Malaga. EDDIE MATIDIO

'Cold-blooded murder'

Although police officials and they were studying homicide charges against the hacienda guards, Pangandaman described the killing as "cold-blooded murder."

"Enough is enough," Pangandaman stated, warning that the government "would not allow anybody to violate the gains of land reform."

The farmers organization Task Force Mapalad (TFM), however, blamed the violence on the government itself, including the DAR.

The TFM, to which the Hacienda Velez-Malaga beneficiaries belong, has alleged that President Arroyo's brother-in-law, Negros Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo has been using his influence with Hacienda Isabang to scuttle the installation of the farmers in the plantation because of his supposedly close ties with hacienda owner Robert Danieri.

The family of one of the slain farmers yesterday called on appeal directly to President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop what they claim and put an end to their woes.

"Whoever did this should be put behind bars," said Clarita Lacerna, 47, widow of slain Alejandro Lacerna Jr. in a briefing at the Iloilo Hotel in Quezon City.

"Presidente Macapagal-Arroyo should put an end to the suffering of the farmers of Hacienda Velez-Malaga," said Mary Ann Lacerna, daughter of one of the slain farmers, Alejandro Lacerna, Sr.

DAR's 'transparency'

Hacienda Dilaguit, owner in law of slain farmer Eli Jopas, 52, appealed to the President to replace Pangandaman "with somebody who can implement agrarian reform not only in Negros Occidental, but to the rest of the country."

"Agrarian reform is not happening because of DAR's incompetence, and in fear of losses," the said in the same briefing.

Hedelyn Ibe-Bitoy, 35, said on the wake of tears: "We will die defending our right to our land."

The former beneficiaries said they decided to reoccupy the 6-ha part of the 144 hectares last Monday after the DAR regional officials kept postponing the conduct of the survey supposedly.

They said they sought permission from the Police Regional Mobile Group to enter the property, but were told to wait outside for the DAR decision. They decided to enter it just the same.

At odds

It was only after several shots were fired when the policemen stopped us, they claimed.

Three of the guards have been picked up. Two others remained at large, according to them.

Roger Rivadeneira, spokesperson of the Hacienda Bishaga Independent Workers Union—a rival of the TFM farmers—said their group had nothing to do with the shooting. The union is at odds with the TFM because they feel that DAR gave the prime lots to the TFM to the disadvantage of their union members.

Rivadeneira said the entry of the farmers into the Ibes-Sarabia estate should not be allowed since there is a pending complaint for contempt before the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the situation remains tense. The TFM farmers have been set up a tent on the middle of the field where they intend to build the nake for their dead. With reports from Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas and AFP

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Gonzalez dares Beltran: Sue me

By Leila B. Salaverria

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ will not stand in the way of Antipolonia Rep. Crispin Beltran who plans to sue those who prosecuted him for rebellion and were cleared by the Supreme Court.

Last Friday, the high tribunal ordered the dismissal of the rebellion case against Beltran because of insufficient evidence.

Gonzalez said he was not bothered with Beltran's claims because they were irrelevant.

He also said that media tended to magnify one or two cases of Beltran to make him appear bigger than he really is.

"You just want to magnify this kind of story. Yes, want to make Mr. Beltran feel big, like a giant, when he is a pygmy," Gonzalez told reporters yesterday.

He added that the anti-wiretapping case would allow the government to earn money through the filing fee.

Beltran said that he would not pursue any action for damages, amounting to P1 million for each of the 11 months he was illegally detained.

Beltran was arrested shortly after President Macapagal-Arroyo declared a state of emergency last year. He and the others were tagged as "leaders and promoters" of an alleged plot to overthrow the Arroyo administration, supposedly with the connivance of communist rebels and military extremists.

But the Supreme Court ordered the dismissal of Beltran's rebellion case, saying the evidence failed to show there was enough cause to charge him with taking part in an armed public uprising.

The high tribunal said none of the affidavits showed that Beltran led a rebellion or that he committed specific acts promoting, maintaining or heading a rebellion.

It also said the prosecution panel wrong in subjecting Beltran to a second inquest for rebellion because none of the arresting officers saw him commit rebellion or had any knowledge of the fact that he just committed rebellion.

Taysan suspects seek transfer

By Leila B. Salaverria

RAPHE THEY WOULD NOT GET A FREE treatment at the Batangas provincial jail's clinic, two policemen tagged as allegedly responsible for the burning of a school in Taysan, Batangas, during the May 14 elections have asked for the transfer of the cases' preliminary investigation to the Department of Justice.

But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he was still studying the issue and did not see the necessity of a transfer at this time.

In a letter to Gonzalez, lawyer Romeo Escueta said his clients, police officers Roberto Hurtada and William Bobo Jr. were being framed for the March 13 torching of the Pinagbarilan Elementary School building that has since been renamed after one of the victims, school teacher Nelly Barang.

Still watches Carlos Bulosan and Guillermo Mahiwo also died from the fire when a group of masked men invaded the school during the canvassing of votes a day after the election, dampening the joy of the barangay.

Hurtada and Bobo are facing possible charges of arson with multiple homicide and serious physical injuries.

According to Escueta, the prosecutor handling the case, Maria Antonette A. Capunitan Jr., was a relative of Supt. Efren Dy, the lawyer who had allegedly served a witness, Cesar Segovia, a position to distribute as having responsibility for the burning of the school.

He also said there was a threat to the life and security of Hurtada and Bobo, claiming to have received "intelligence reports that three more plan to liquidate [them] to effectively extend the harassment."

He said the plan was "a conspiracy with the extremists such whose the 16th Regional Special Operations Group in Region IV have orchestrated and perpetrated."

Former cops said the burning of the school building could be politically motivated because a witness, in his sworn statement before the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said he saw the assailants alighting from vehicles belonging to Taysan Mayor Efren Pantoja.

Aside from Mayor Pantoja and Dy, Atty. Escueta also implicated Pantoja in connection with the burning of the Taysan school building.

Two other policemen have been placed under restrictive custody and are being investigated for possible administrative charges—Taysan municipal police commander Chief Insp. Ulpiano Nanares and his deputy, Insp. Ruel dela Cruz.

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Corrections

IN THE JUNE 5 ISSUE, a story on Page A1... "Padded votes for 4 party-list..." misspelled the first name of the secretary general of party-list group Bayan Muna. The Bayan Muna secretary general's name is Nathaniel—not Nathaniel—Santiago.

...

IN THE JUNE 5 ISSUE, the caption of a photo accompanying a Global Pinoy story on Page A12—"Filipino lawyer in LA enters action packed stint as MD"...misspelled the surname of a Filipino lawyer based in Los Angeles, California. The lawyer's name is Alexei Calleros, not Caleros.

...

IN THE JUNE 4 ISSUE, an article on Page A12... "Gonzales angelito prefer poll-regional chief"... misspelled the surname of the president of the party-list group Akbayan. The Akbayan president's name is Ronald Llamas—not Llanza.

JOINT STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

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Money flowed in rush to approve franchise of Pagcor, solon claims

By Christian V. Esguerra

LOBBY MONEY FLOWED INTO BOTH chambers of Congress paving the way for the controversial expansion of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation's franchise for another 20 years, an opposition lawmaker alleged yesterday.

One source received a whopping $2 mill, four in exchange for withdrawing his opposition to the franchise extension, Iloilo Rep. Raul S. Sapiña charged during the plenary session of the lower house.

"I understand a source received $2 mill... in order to remove his objection," he said, repeating the same accusation in an interview with the Inquirer minutes later.

Edcel C. Lagman, deputy floor minority leader for corporate communications, denied the allegations. "All our funds are checked by the Commission on Audit. So how can we give out $2 million? It's far-fetched," Bitag said.

Sapiña is underestimating the wisdom of his fellow congressmen, he added.

Asked if he had any evidence, Sapiña said the matter was "no secret" among his colleagues, including senators, even because the two chambers ended their two-day special session last February.

The lawmaker also told the floor that money from Pagcor was allegedly used to fund the residence of Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino's son in Makati.

'Heard from the ground'

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. said this information was for "hearsay" from the ground" to the tune of P120 to P320 million.

"Lobby money flowed into the House, in to Congress," Sapiña told the legislature.

The lawmaker raised the matter of lobby money in an attempt to convince the body to act on his pending motion questioning the quorum during the session on June 4 that approved the consolidation of House Bill 3608 which granted the renewed franchise.

"Why the rush? Why the rush when I have a pending, unresolved motion based on a constitutional requirement which the House violated?" he asked.

Sapiña noted that only 40 lawmakers voted in favor of HB 3608 during the special session on February 26 while others voted against it.

With only 80 congressmen present at the plenary session hall, the number clearly didn't constitute a majority of the House as required by law, he said.

"We are obnoxious to the Constitution is an act not-existent at all," he told the body.

'Overtaken by time'

Majority Leader Arthur Defensor replied, saying the matter had already been "overtaken by time" and, as a result, the chamber body couldn't act further on the motion.

Locsin suggested that the House be divided to determine if the bill had been passed or not. Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar said the suggestion was not needed, but said the issue would be discussed "more thoroughly" during session this afternoon.

Gambling theme park

Later, Sapiña told the Inquirer that the 10-hour lawmaker's ranked 140-1609 because of the planned construction of a P20 billion gambling theme park in the reclamation area in Pasay.

The franchise of the state-run gambling agency was set to expire in June next year.

The bill was crafted "because the investor would not put in his money if the franchise ended next year," Sapiña said. "He wanted the franchise extended so he'd get back the money he invested."

Senate OKs new charter to give UP more autonomy

By Dona Pazzibugan

A NEW CHARTER THAT GRANTS GREATER institutional and fiscal autonomy to the University of the Philippines, the country's premier state university, was approved by the Senate yesterday, a day before it adjourns sine die indefinitely.

A bicameral conference committee last Monday finished reconciling the House and Senate versions of the UP Charter bill.

The bicameral conference report has to be ratified by the House of Representatives before the bill can be submitted to Malacañang for signing.

Small budget

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, principal author of the Senate version, said the new UP charter would prove the decline in the competitiveness of the UP and the exodus of its top professors to private schools.

"Many of the problems of UP are borne out of a small budget to reform and improve many of its services. With the ratification of the UP Charter Act, the university will finally be able to generate income through the use of its resources and assets which could be used to improve its curricula and salary system," said Pangilinan.

Pangilinan is a former chair of the UP University Student Council and in 1988 ran as a student representative on the UP Board of Regents, the university's highest policy-making body.

Among other things, the UP Charter Act will allow the exemption of the UP from the Salary Standardization Act which will enable it to increase the salaries of its teaching and nonteaching staff; tax exemptions of donations and revenues used solely for educational purposes; and greater autonomy by removing Malacañang's power to appoint the UP president and other sectoral representatives.

Safeguards

It also provides safeguards in the utilization and disposition of UP land and other assets such as the creation of an independent trust committee that would advise the board of regents on such investments.

Under the new Charter, the regents can approve and enter into contracts like joint ventures, long-term leases and sale for the university to be able to raise revenues.

Contracts worth above P50 million would require the vote of two-thirds of the board. Other contracts worth P10 million and less will require only a majority vote.

11 members

The UP Board of Regents has 11 members: The Commission on Higher Education who chairs the board; the UP president as vice chair; the chair of the future committee on education, arts and culture; the chair of the House committee on higher and technical education; the UP Alumni Association president; a faculty regent; a student regent; a staff regent; and three sectoral regents.

"After almost 14 years in the legislative mill, we are glad that this landmark piece of legislation will finally become a law," said Pangilinan, who has been pursuing the bill since 2001.

Threat of hospital 'holiday' lingers

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PRIVATE HOSPITALS WILL POSSIBLY BOUGHT with their "hospital holiday" on June 22 to 23 if talks with Ombudsman over unpaid hospital bills bog down.

The Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines earlier threatened to declare a "hospital holiday" to protest a law barring hospitals from detaining patients with unpaid bills.

The PHAP will ask the government that they be allowed to honor only promissory notes from government agencies.

Guidelines

"The implementing guidelines of the law should guarantee us [private hospitals] that promissory notes would be fully paid," PHAP spokesperson Benito Atienza told the Inquirer.

PHAP will meet today with Health Secretary Francisco Duque III to talk about the issue. It was the DOH which initiated the dialogue as an attempt to thwart the planned "hospital holiday" [illegible] ... [illegible] ... [illegible] ...

Gringo not on speaking terms with Erap

HONASAN

RECTO

Recto accepting defeat an act of statesmanship, says De Castro

By Cynthia D. Balana

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FUTSY ENERGY INC. 4/F Alpha Court Bldg. 1126 Pasong Tamo St. 1227 Makati City	Peter Hoorelbeke	Project Manager
FREIGHT INC. Unit 1905 Discovery Tower, Ortigas Center, Pasig	Mahmud Rahmat Kaka	Chief Executive Officer
THE ZENITAKA CORPORATION Unit 1002 - 1007 Cyberpod Centre Harbor St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Go Kato	Project Engineer
SAMSUNG MEDICAL CENTER DERMATOLOGY AND PLASTIC CLINIC CORP. 11/F Tektite Bldg., ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Ji Hoon Kim	Vice President
AUFELD PHILIPPINES, INC. 11/F Cyber Business Park, Nanang Rodriguez Ave., Bonifacio Global City	Axel Mark Kallenbach	Vice President Managing Director
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HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS. INC. Unit B-1, 9th Flr. Vertis North Corporate Center 1, North Ave., Quezon City	Hongwei Wang	Public Relations Manager
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS. INC. Unit B-1, 9th Flr. Vertis North Corporate Center 1, North Ave., Quezon City	Yiliang Ding	Technical Consultant
KIS SYCOM INC. Unit 401 Tektite Bldg. Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Yonghyun Hong	Administrative Manager
ELECTRO TECH SOLUTIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. 8/F Exit Tower, STE Ctr., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Takakazu Arao	Senior Manager Automotive Electronics Department
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY MANILA Level 23 Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	William Lindy Pickering	Specialist
FRESH N NATURAL FOODS, INC. Unit G-3 Singapore Corporate Center 6001 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	Mark Chiesa	Business Development Manager
PARAGON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER CARE LTD. 14/F Technogen Tower, 6C/2C Pilar, MPS Apple Ave., Makati City	Gina Rubio	Customer Support Staff
PARAGON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER CARE LTD. 14/F Technogen Tower, 6C/2C Pilar, MPS Apple Ave., Makati City	Ishika Jain	Customer Support Staff
PARAGON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER CARE LTD. 14/F Technogen Tower, 6C/2C Pilar, MPS Apple Ave., Makati City	Dale Michael Lang	Customer Support Staff
MAYVEN TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 10/F Technogen Tower, 6C/2C Pilar, MPS Apple Ave. cor. CSP Pupa Ave., Makati City	Alma Ala	Team Manager Bidding Design
MAYVEN TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 10/F Technogen Tower, 6C/2C Pilar, Apple Ave., Makati City	Mia Mia	Chinese Customer Support Associate
SPORTS SQUARE ONLINE, INC. 3/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Ali Dee Tan	Customer Support Staff
LEGGE ENTERPRISES, INC. Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Tony Hernando	Customer Support Staff
LEGGE ENTERPRISES, INC. Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Chiang Wei Ying	Accounting Clerk
LEGGE ENTERPRISES, INC. Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Gabriel Hadan	Customer Support Staff
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Various	Technician
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Ripig Chin Yin	Technician
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Yen Hsin Pan	Waste Cutter
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Kan Yup Sun	Knit Supervisor
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Kim Mikyung	IT Manager
OLIVER GOOSE II INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1 & 2 Government Court Bank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Tindang Sakit, Makati City	Sam Yin Nee	Supervisor

If you have any information/s relative to the above-mentioned applications please communicate with the Regional Director.

In Commemoration of the 109th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Philippine Independence, 6/12/07, 9:00 a.m. Rizal Park, Manila and Simultaneous Flag Raising Ceremonies in all Regional Offices, Satellite Offices, Overseas Posts, For more information, call 6734301 - 6734333

LOURDES M. TRAMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI, June 6, 2007)

Integrated Agro-Fishery Resources Management Project (IAFRMP)
Republic of the Philippines
National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC)
PAMBANSANG PANGKABUKIRAN NG PAGSASAKA AT PANGISDAAN
Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon
Tel. No. 926-0511 to 20 local 512

Quezon City, 30TH DAY OF MAY CY 2007

INVITATION TO BID

The National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) hereby invites sealed bids for the sale of 15,000 metric tons of ammonium sulphate fertilizer (dry prilled) (AMS 21%) to be delivered August 15, 2007 under the IFAD Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers.

Bid documents shall be available for issuance starting June 6, 2007 from NAFC BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

For purposes of clarification, a pre-bid conference will be held on June 7, 2007, 10:00 a.m. at the Agriculture Conference Room, Agustina Hall, DA Compound (National Road), Diliman, Quezon City.

Fully completed sealed bids should be submitted not later than 10:00 a.m. on June 13, 2007. Bids submitted after the scheduled time will not be accepted.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Florida P. Avellana at Tel. Nos. 929-6234 and 926-0992.

(Sgd.) **ELMER G. ESPANCHON**
BAC Chairman

(PDI, June 6 & 7, 2007)

Airport tightens fuel depot security

By Tarra Quismundo

THE NINOY INTERNATIONAL Airport Authority (NIAA) has increased security measures in the fuel depot in Pasay City following reports of a foiled plot to bomb jet fuel lines in New York's JFK airport.

Shortly after the botched attack made headlines, round-the-clock patrols were deployed around the fuel facility that houses storage and refilling equipment of private oil firms, airport security chief Angel Arandia said yesterday.

The 107-acre plot was said to have been distilled from the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, which killed thousands when terrorists flew two commercial planes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

"The increased police visibility has deployed a mobile patrol unit in front of the depot to guard it on all fronts," Arandia said.

The depot is located between the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminals 1 and 2, close to the international cargo terminal.

Inside the terminals, airport security guards, Miss Potter and the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group have been told to make their rounds with extra care.

Arandia, however, said there was no "imminent threat" to Philippine airports. He said that Miss Potter has not received any security advisory from the International Civil Aviation Organization, a body that normally issues security alerts to the world's airports.

Ban on liquids to be lifted soon

By Tarra Quismundo

THERE IS STILL A TOTAL BAN ON CARRYING liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) through the country's international airports although airports authorities are preparing for a partial lifting of the ban as has been done in airports in other parts of the world.

Airport security chief Angel Arandia said yesterday that the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) has begun readying its contracting personnels for new security screening procedures which would lift the total ban on LAGs. But he could not say when this would take effect.

Airports in the United States, Australia, Europe and other Asian cities have already been enforcing a revised regulation allowing 100 ml or less of LAGs to be carried in carry-on bags.

"We are preparing the guidelines and signages. They have also started training personnel on the new screening procedures so that **we will be ready for re-implementation**," Arandia told the inquirer yesterday.

The MIAA has been enforcing the downgraded security on LAGs but is awaiting the go-ahead from the Office for Transportation Security under the Department of Transportation and Communication which has the sole authority to approve new security procedures in the country's air and sea ports.

The LAG ban was enforced in August last year in light of a foiled terror plot involving liquid bombs to be brewed in flights.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
ROSAL MEDICAL CENTER
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The ROSAL MEDICAL CENTER through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) intends to apply and bid the following contract/s: Project — PROCUREMENT OF HOSPITAL EQUIPMENTS AND SUPPLIES (MEDICAL) (ABC) PHP
   Description — PRICE TWO MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THIRTY-TWO THOUSAND PHP
   Supply, Delivery, Installation and Other Related Services of Automated Tellering Machine (ATM) — Fifteen (15) units — ABC PHP 2,532,000.00
   Source of Fund: Income Generated from Operations
   Project — PROCUREMENT OF HOSPITAL EQUIPMENTS AND SUPPLIES (MEDICAL) (ABC) PHP
   ULTRASOUND MACHINE (1) UNIT — ABC PHP 3,000,000.00
   Supply and Delivery of Ultrasound Machine — One (1) unit — ABC PHP 3,000,000.00
   Source of Fund: Income Generated from Operations
   Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.
2. Prospective bidders must be licensed and authorized to engage in the business as required by existing laws and must submit the following documents: Valid Mayor's/Business Permit issued by the city or municipality where the principal place of business of the prospective bidder is located; Valid Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License and Registration for the type and cost of the contract to be bidded; Tax Clearance per Executive Order 398, series of 2005, as finally reviewed and approved by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR); Audited Financial Statements stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions for the preceding calendar year which should not be earlier than two (2) years from the date of bid submission; and Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) computation.
3. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours.
4. A complete set of Bidding documents may be acquired by interested bidders from the address given below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00). The Procuring Entity shall allow the bidder to pay the said fee through cash or manager's check. Bidders who submit bids through courier shall ensure that the Procuring Entity has received the bid documents prior to the deadline for the submission of bids. Bidders who submit bids through courier do so at their own risk.
5. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m. June 20, 2007. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.
6. Bid opening shall be on 10:00 a.m. June 20, 2007 at the given address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity.
7. The ROSAL MEDICAL CENTER reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
8. For further information, please refer to:
   1. Guido Jerald Ronquillo, Auditor's check, bank and/or manager's check or postal money order — 1% of ABC
   2. Bid Security — 2% of ABC
   3. Contract Performance Security — 5% of ABC
   4. Contract Agreement — 1% of ABC
   (Not to exceed P30,000.00)
9. Bidders should have completed within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids a contract similar to the Project. The description of an activity's "similarity" to the contract to be bidded is provided in the Bidding Documents.
10. The Procuring Entity has the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
11. For further information, please refer to:
    JENNY G. CAIG, MD, FPCS
    Chairman
    BAC Secretariat
    Rosal Medical Center
    Tel. No. 000-0000

(PDI, June 4, 2007)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

Project	Quantity	Approved Budget*	Cost of Bid Document/s
Supply, Delivery, Installation and Other Related Services of Automated Tellering Machine (ATM)	Fifteen (15) units	P5,700,000.00	P 5,000.00
Source of Fund: DBP Fund			

*Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

Expected Date of Completion: Sixty (60) Calendar Days upon receipt of Purchase Order

Schedule of Activities

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	June 13, 2007 (Wednesday) at 1:30 p.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	*See or before* 10:00 a.m. of June 26, 2007 (Tuesday)	BAC Secretariat, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals (Prospective bidders are encouraged to witness this activity)	June 26, 2007 (Tuesday) at 10:30 a.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. Prospective Bidders must have been authorized to **Supply, Deliver and Maintain Automated Tellering Machine for at least three (3) years.** Only Bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check shall be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine the bidder's compliance of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedures.

Interested parties may download these forms at **www.devbankphil.com.ph** and at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may purchase the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php5,000.00.

The prospective bidders are advised to check the Bank's website and the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) for bid bulletin and announcements regarding the project.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 818-9511to 70 local 2111 to 2113.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI, June 6, 2007)

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, June 6, 2007
9th Week in Ordinary Time
Memorial

1st Reading: Tb 1:3, 11, 16-17
Gospel: Mark 12:18-27

The Sadducees came to Jesus. Since they (Sadducees) claim to no resurrection, they questioned him in this way, "Master, in Dt Moses wrote that if anyone died leaving a wife but no children, his brother must take the wife and give her a child who will be considered the child of his deceased brother." Now, there were seven brothers. The first married a wife, but he died without leaving any children. The second took the wife and he, too, died, leaving no children. The same thing happened to the third. Finally the seven died leaving no children. Last of all the woman died. Now, in the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife? For the seven had her as wife."

Jesus replied, "You could be wrong in this regard, because you understand neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. When they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry but are like the angels in heaven.

"Now, about the resurrection of the dead, have you not read in the Book of Moses about the burning bush in the book of Moses? God said to him: I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is the God, not of the dead but of the living. You are greatly astray."

Commentary:

With great fear for mercy to the folks of the world, He asks for forgiveness for himself and his people in order who have become a reproach to the Sadducees. He is torn with grief and wants to die in his misery. And Sarah, the daughter of Raguel is praying as well for release, for such times she is to marry, her husband is killed on their wedding night—this happened seven times. She is grieved, and wants to end herself herself. And both prayers come to God, and Raphael (this archangel) is sent to heal them both. We are all bound together whether we are aware of it or not. And all things, situations, and events are directed by the hand and providence of God. The reason is that always there is God.

Jesus is mocked by the Sadducees (who don't believe in resurrection) with an unbelievable test of a woman with 7 husbands (all brothers) and then up to children with her. Who would be her husband in heaven? He says to God is the God of the living and we belong to the living God, never-ending relationship account. Our relationships on earth are meant to express 100% love and generosity but we are 0% love, now and forever. So we have to begin again to act?

Christian Publications, Inc. 1240 Ave. 10, cor. 10th St., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City, Philippines
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E-mail: cpi@gmail.com • Website: http://www.cbcpi.org
Christian Publications, Inc. authorized representative in the Philippines

Japan agency upgrades RP credit rating

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE JAPAN CREDIT RATING Agency has revised its outlook on the Philippines from "stable" to "positive," citing the country's improving macroeconomic climate.

A "positive" outlook means an upgrade in the country's credit rating is likely in the near term, but investors should not interpret it as a government's credit worthiness, which would result in lower interest rates imposed on its borrowings.

The JCRA's current credit rating on the Philippine government's long-term and foreign currency-denominated debts is at "BBB-," which is within investment grade.

"The improving fiscal position [of the Philippines] has triggered a virtuous cycle of prompting the appreciation of the peso, which in turn has sent both the inflation rate and interest rates falling," the JCRA said in a statement.

The Japanese-based credit watchdog also cited developments, including the 6.9-percent economic growth rate in the first quarter, the rising remittances inflows from overseas Filipino workers, and improving balance-of-payments position for its decision to revise its outlook on the Philippines.

Highest in 17 years

The economic growth of 6.9 percent in the first quarter, which was partly boosted by higher income by the services and export sectors, was the highest in 17 years.

Economic managers also said the government declining budget deficit helped make a business climate attractive for more investors.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the improved credit outlook was an indication of the confidence of the international financial community in the Philippines' ability to sustain its fiscal reform programs.

The government's budget deficit dropped to P64.8 billion last year from P146.8 billion in 2005.

"We are pleased that JCRA recognizes that the discipline of the administration to focus on the economy and the nation's overall economic health is producing measurable results," Teves told a press conference.

The JCRA also said in a statement that the improved outlook was based on its belief that the political situation in the Philippines would not worsen, with opposition candidates winning seats in the May elections.

JCRA said any uncertainty over the commitment of existing government reforms brought about by the victory of the opposition candidates in the Senate race would be offset by the overwhelming victory of administration candidates in the House of Representatives.

Political stability

"The ruling camp's outright victory in the House of Representatives will help enhance political stability as it will deter opposition attempts to impeach the President," the JCRA added.

In a related development, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday the Philippines is near the top ten choice among major US companies for finance, technology, telecommunications and customer products, as well as accounting firms.

This was the information given by Consul Theodore Boyles, senior analyst of IBC Capital Markets, who spoke at a business networking reception organized by the Shanghai Pudong Outsourcing Council, the Philippine Consulate General, and the Philippine Trade Office in New York last week.

Boyles spoke on the topic "Global financing and investment and Outsourcing Business Process Outsourcing Services," according to a report from Consul General Cecilia Rebong in New York. With a report from Cynthia D. Rubeno

Disruptive effect of soaring peso worries BSP gov

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS GOVERNOR Amando Tetangco acknowledged for the first time that the peso's rapid rise was worrisome and could have "disruptive" consequences.

The peso hit a high of 45.50 to the dollar Monday, its strongest level since September 2006. It recovered Tuesday to a low of 45.80 and settled at 45.85.

"There's a lot of concern with the rate of appreciation, which may cause volatility and lead to some disruptive effects," Tetangco told reporters.

"We prefer to see an orderly adjustment." It was the first time the BSP has conceded that the peso's rise was a cause for concern.

Just two months ago, BSP deputy governor Diwa Guinigundo told reporters that while the unit continued to strengthen, "relative to the other regional currencies, such as the Chinese(sic) yuan and the (Thai) baht, are remain competitive." Ki Mohamad Bengar Dimalen, secretary of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, warned that Philippine exports growth would be capped to between 13 and 15 percent this year due to the rising peso.

AFP

Comelec set to decide on party-list row

By Jovanie Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS IS SET TO issue its ruling on the conflicting slates of nominees of several party-list groups which are poised to win in the just-concluded elections.

"The resolutions have been divided upon and are now being tossed to the commission-en," Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said in a press conference yesterday.

Bishop Hayong Yuvahong, a party-list group identified with the El Shaddai charismatic movement, is entering the race with three other slates of nominees. Bishop is currently leading in the Comelec's party-list count.

Based on the latest unofficial media tally of the Comelec canvassing of party-list votes, Bishop leads 1,112,686 votes or 7.98 percent of the nearly 14 million votes cast for party-list groups.

The Bishop nominee slate is led by its acting president and secretary-general Rose Christine Seldon while the other faction is led by Brito Miranda, who was nominated by former Bishop president Bienvenido Bobico.

Aside from Bishop, groups such as Abagad, Seven-star Foundation of the Philippines and the Bagong Tao Movement also have two separate slates who were backed by feuding factions.

However, Abalos hinted that the Comelec rulings on the other groups would only be issued once they win the election.

"If the party doesn't win, then the issue on the two slates would already be moot and academic," Abalos said.

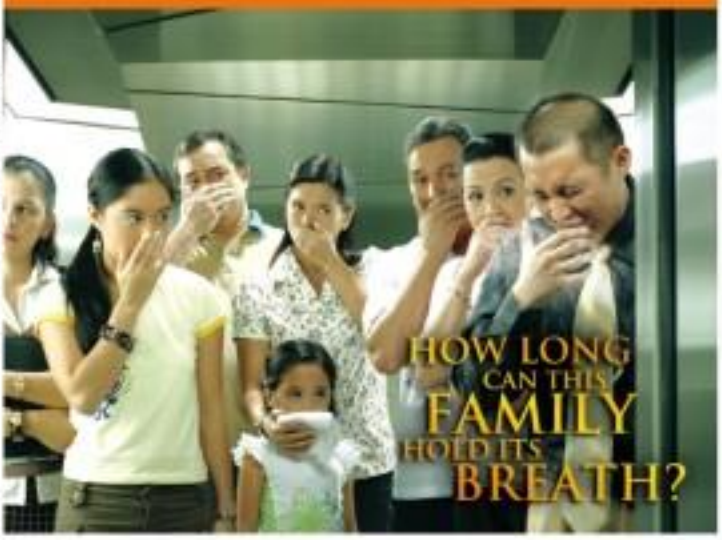
A party-list group needs to win two percent of the votes cast for the party-list to be considered as at least one seat in the House of Representatives. Under the law, however, the top contenders will be entitled to three seats.

Abalos yesterday also said that the Comelec would bar those who ran but lost in the 2004 election but who are now nominees of winning party-list groups in the 2007 election from taking a seat in the House.

The Comelec cited sited Republic Act No. 7941 or the Party-List System Act of 1995, Section 8 which states that a group's list of nominees "shall not include any candidate for any elective office or persons who have lost in bid for elective office in the immediately preceding election."

Abalos did not name names but a seat of the list of party-list nominees submitted to Comelec claimed by one by relatives to lawyer Mariano Martinez Jr and broadcast journalist Jose Tay Arnaiz, executive and legal assistant, respectively of the Bagong Nasionalistang Kilusang of the Philippine (Bana), who lost run for a senatorial seat in the 2004 election last last.

Bana placed 14th based on the unofficial election tally of the Comelec canvassing for party-list votes, garnering about 2.69 percent of the votes cast.



INFLUENZA. A SINGLE SNEEZE TRAVELING AT A SPEED OF 600 MILES PER HOUR MAY CARRY ABOUT 100,000 INFLUENZA VIRUS CELLS. THESE STUBBORN CELLS CAN STAY ALIVE IN A ROOM FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES. EVENTUALLY, THEY COULD ENTER YOUR BODY THROUGH YOUR MOUTH, EYES OR NOSE.

Now, think about it, whom do you share a room with?
Or to put it another way, with whom do you share the air you breathe?

Influenza can infect anyone just by breathing the same air an infected person breathes. Moving too fast, every member of your family might be infected before you know it.

This highly contagious disease called Influenza is commonly misconceived as "just a Flu" or the common cold. The truth is, it could lead to serious complications like Bronchitis, Pneumonia, brain failure, and ultimately, death.

Fortunately there is a vaccine that can protect you and your family from this threat. Get yourself and your family vaccinated against the Influenza virus.

Sanofi pasteur

GlaxoSmithKline Leading the way in vaccines

BUONG PAMILYA MAGPABAKUNA

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT YOUR VACCINATION NEEDS TODAY.

Missing activist, media icon shared passion for farming

From page A1

experimenting in organic farming since 1998 at the 32-ha farm in Barangay Tartaria, San Miguel, Bulacan, that Joe Burgos bought in the late 1980s with the intention of making it his retirement home.

The farm inspired the young Jonas to pursue a course in agriculture. He had logged two years in a political science course at the Don Bosco College in Manila when he decided to study agriculture at the Benguet State University.

After graduation, he lived at the farm and devoted his time to organic farming, his mother said.

Jonas was particularly interested in organic rice farming—a passion that he shared with his father, who had by then become semi-retired from journalism and was spending his days as a "gentleman farmer."

In fact, Editha said, a part of the farm was devoted to rice paddies specifically for Jonas' experiments.

Missing since April 28

Jonas, 27, was abducted by three unidentified men and one woman while he was having lunch at the Tree Canteen mall in Quezon City about 1 p.m. on April 28.

He has been missing since then.

At least two witnesses told Jonas' mother that he was alone when the group dragged him to a nearby van. (See story with Piper Ilo, PAR 104)

The military became a prime suspect in the abduction when the plate number was traced to another vehicle that had been impounded by the 56th Infantry Battalion at its headquarters in Norzagaray, Bulacan, since June 2006.

Lt. Col. Noel Clemente, who was the battalion commander until February this year, said his replacement, Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, knew both and the latter plans may have been useless by illegal actions around the military camp.

Clemente, Feliciano and three other officers—Lt. Col. Edwin Gaga, Cpl. Canero Bagallon and Pfc. Jose Villena, all assigned to the 56th IB—have denied involvement in Jonas' abduction.

But witnesses also told Editha Burgos that Jun was shouting "Sayawin lang po nito (I'm just an actress)" when his abductors dragged him into the van. Jonas' words evoked incidents the witnesses that the military was behind the disappearance.

In a PowerPoint presentation that the Armed Forces used in briefing materials for soldiers, several groups are listed as "enemies of the state." Among these groups is the Hilumang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, the mother organization of the Alyansa ng Mga Bukid na Bakas where members Jonas had been training in organic farming since 1999.

'Peace Zone'

Joe Burgos' Tiri Forum statement, an end of martial law and the detention of Rodolfo Biazon.

In December 1981, military appointed Rodolfo the tabloid's office. Burgos and 13 other staff members and columnists—including Doris Francisco "Dax" Rodrigo, Divan Armando Mabry, Eric Martinez and Dominico Cecilio—were detained for publishing stories that questioned the authenticity of Marcos' war medals.

They were held for a week in the Fort Bonifacio stockade and released under house arrest while awaiting trial for subversion.

At the gate of his farm, Joe Burgos had put up a sign saying "Peace Zone. Violence against all homeland armament is prohibited."

Indeed, the farm is a peaceful place, with exotic chickens running among rows of fruit trees, manicured shrubs, flowers and vegetables.

Joe Burgos died on Nov. 16, 2003, and was buried in the farm as he had wished.

SECOND TIME AROUND: CHR Chair Purificacion Quisumbing and Commissioner Dominador Calamba II chide the military intelligence chief for his failure to attend for the second time a hearing into the Jonas Burgos abduction and continued disappearance. JAY ONGKINGCO

Spy chief snubs Jonas hearing

From page A1

means to an investigation where subpoenaed persons would be told to swear to their statements without being apprised of their constitutional right to remain silent or guard against self-incrimination.

At yesterday's hearing, Commissioner Dominador Calamba raised doubt about the AFP's avowed inability to locate Burgos dead or alive, given the resources at the military's disposal.

Calamba told Ignacio that the public might find "those reasons of yours" hard to believe. He was referring to the AFP's claim that the Cessna plane that witnesses had seen on the vehicle used by Burgos' abductors were meant to "shake" from a help impounded in an army camp for "illegal logging."

'Operational matters'

Earlier in the hearing, after Ignacio repeated that Burgos could not make it because of "operational matters" that needed his attention, the lawyer already got a roundfull from Calamba.

"I notice that he doesn't attend to the subpoenas sent to him and sends lower-ranking officials. Didn't know if he has any respect for the (CHR) as a civilian office," Calamba said, adding:

"That's why you (lady) are always pilloried by the press."

At some point in the hearing, Quisumbing cut Ignacio short when he again tried to speak from the sidelines.

The CHR chair said the panel would not recognize Ignacio—and after he had "interviewed" the commission on the propriety of the proceedings—unless he took the stand.

Thieves in well-guarded camp?

In his own exchange with Ignacio, Calamba said it continues to the alleged theft of the license plates: "I don't know who will buy that also.

"We don't believe that you wouldn't find Burgos with all the operatives you have."

Calamba later clarified that the hearing was not intended to prosecute the military but to give it a chance to set its side, especially since media reports supposedly tended to allwhose Burgos' abduction to the military.

In quitting Lt. Col. Noel Clemente, the former commander of the 56th Infantry Battalion in Norzagaray, Bulacan, Calamba wondered why a supposedly "well-guarded" military camp would lose impounded materials to thieves.

Clemente said security "lapses" could occur given the size of the camp, but added that he had yet to check whether the theft occurred during his stint as camp commander.

"What your men do or fail to do is your responsibility, being the battalion commander," Calamba told Clemente.

In contrast, the commissioners appeared to be more appreciative of the report of Senior Supt. Joel Napoleon Coronel on the PNP investigation of the Burgos case.

"Unfortunately, we have not located him," said Coronel, chief of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) for the National Capital Region.

He said the Burgos family had been shown "three unclaimed cadavers"—unclaimed bodies buried in the barangay—but had not identified any to be that of the missing activist.

Coronel also said the CIDG had "measured" by phone military camps and other police camps, as well as the National Bureau of Investigation, to check if Burgos had actually been "arrested for lawful reasons."

No inspection of body

But "personnel," he said, had presented the CIDG from retrieving the body transported at the military general headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

"That newspaper is allowed to go inside [it]," he said.

Coronel also said that on May 29, a security guard who witnessed Burgos' abduction on April 28 was shown photos of two Army soldiers who had apprehended the "illegal logging" boat in Bulacan.

He said the guard did not identify the soldiers as involved in the abduction.

Roxas warns: JPEPA ...

From page A1

the House to ratify the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) amid concerns raised by Tokyo for the early approval.

The chair of the Senate committee on economic affairs said his studies showed that 20 percent of Philippine products covered by the JPEPA would be adversely affected because the deal would reduce duties on Japanese cars to zero the Philippines to zero from between 6 percent and 10 percent.

"The domestic industries that would be affected are in garments, electronics such as motors, washing machines and cooking ranges, and automobiles and spare parts," said Roxas.

Top dollar earners

He noted that the three sectors were the country's top dollar earners.

The agreement was signed by Ms Arroyo and then Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Helsinki in September 2006.

The deal, which is similar to agreements that Japan already has with Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, goes beyond liberalization of trade in goods and services.

It includes measures to ensure the smooth movement of people, capital and information, and covers areas like investment and trade facilitation, as well as cooperation in science and technology, human resources development, small and medium enterprises, and the environment.

Environmentalists

But even before it could be submitted to the Senate for ratification, it drew objections from environmentalists fearing that no tariff reduction provisions might pave the way for the entry of hazardous wastes from Japan.

Roxas said that in exchange for opening its market to Japan, the Philippines would be allowed to bring in agriculture products and send more professionals to Japan.

On paper, the JPEPA offered a fair trade between the Philippines and Japan, he said.

Roxas was optimistic that the pact would be given serious consideration by the Senate if the government revised the deal to get a better trade-off.

Tough requirements

But he said that shipping Philippine humans to Japanese groceries or sending Filipino nurses to Japanese hospitals was easier said than done.

Japan is widely known for aggressively protecting its farmers and labor sector from foreign competition with its vast array of non-tariff barriers like stringent quarantine rules and long requirements.

Roxas noted, for example, that the JPEPA provisions on the hiring of Filipino nurses were so tough "it would be difficult for the Philippines to comply with it to the next three to five years."

"They want our nurses to be fluent in both written and spoken (Nihongo) and to pass a test in (Nihongo). It takes time to master this," he said.

In the meantime, giant Japanese companies could take advantage of the JPEPA's provisions, he said.

The removal and grant electronic and consumable companies from Japan would put most closing down their production facilities in the country because they would profit by selling their products at lower tariffs.

"But what will happen to the thousands of employees in these industries?" he said.

Roxas believed that the agreement's economic repercussions were more serious than the political controversy that stalled the signing of the deal.

But he did not share the environmentalist groups' fears that Japan would be sending its toxic wastes to the Philippines.

"What prevents the entry is Republic Act No. 6969 or the Toxic and Hazardous Waste Law, which will prevail in this case no matter what the treaty says," Roxas said.

Top priority

Still, he said the Senate was keeping an open mind on the deal.

Senate President Manuel Villar said the declaration of Malacañang that the agreement was its "top priority" following Ms Arroyo's meeting with Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi last month "committed to a promise on the Senate to ratify the deal.

"It's not going to be easy. It's going to be tough especially the toxic issue. But in fairness to the proponents of the treaty we have to give it a fair hearing," Villar said.

In a meeting with Ms Arroyo, Abe agreed that a formal exchange of letters be made at the ministerial level to assure the Filipino public and the Senate that no Japanese toxic waste would be dumped on the Philippines.

Abe said it would be better to put what he promised in document form. "We will be ready to move in that direction," Villar said.

TEACHER-COP. A member of the Bicol region mobile group takes over as teacher in Aklan's Nagsuy Elementary School in La Libertad. (PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER)

Cops 'moonlight' as teachers in far-flung areas

By Alexis Pope

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE IN THE Bicol region will be continuing this school year its program of assigning policemen-teachers to remote rebel-infested areas.

Chief Supt. Joselito Bukol, the region's PNP commander, told reporters the command has deployed at least six police officers who can teach in these areas in Albay and Sorsogon.

But the chief said that, Bukol said, these police-teachers have been assigned to Zingaya, Bicol North, Sec. In Bogalo, La Union, and two to Batocalol, Pangasinan.

"These areas are far from the center of government with frequent sightings of the NPA (New People's Army). We want to assure residents that the police government is still working for them," Bukol said.

Under the 2-year-old program called Pulis Sa Barrio Ay," members of the Provincial Mobile Group are tasked to these areas to teach public school students basic arithmetic and English.

"They are already assigned there anyway and we figured out a way to make good use of our men while at the same time contributing something to the community," said Bukol.

The members of the Provincial and Regional Mobile Groups are usually at the frontline in the fight against communist insurgents.

"These policemen who are tending were also former teachers or have education degrees," said Bukol, adding that the service is prime-level of change.

"We want to do the little things that are touching people's lives. The feedback has been good. Community leaders have told us they appreciate the service we are rendering," he said.

The policemen-teachers are also involved in community work like opening up school buildings and constructing classrooms, Bukol said.

CMY (CIB). A policeman and his dog guard the courtyard in Agoo, La Union for the policeman's regular duty. (PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER)

Teenaged rebel falls

By Carmelene G. Arambulo

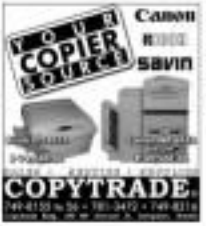
A 14-YEAR-OLD BOY believed to be a New People's Army medic was captured by the military last weekend following an encounter with communist rebels in Pandakan, Quezon.

Army spokesperson in Col. Ernesto Torres said yesterday that members of the 80th Army troops raided the NPA camp at the rebels.

Torres said that on the morning of June 3, troops encountered some 30 NPA rebels under a certain "Ricky" in a fierce fight that lasted for 30 minutes at Sitio Kapay. Followed by Pandakan town.

He said the rebels then fled southwest, prompting the troops to pursue them and eventually seize their camp.

The troops also captured 16-year-old Reyes Tamadaw alone. Bilong and recovered documents and other belongings in the camp.



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PhilHealth is healthy, OIC insists

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PHILHEALTH IS HEALTHY AND running ultra clearance.

This is the assurance made by officials of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) after a former hearing revealed that the government agency lost 99 billion to fraudulent claims.

PhilHealth Officer in charge Valentin Gozon said that claim was, they filed 627 cases for alleged fraudulent claims against hospitals and doctors and about 4,000 cases in the last seven years.

The cases, filed from 2000 to 2007, involved some P20 million—way below the P4 billion exposed losses.

Gozon said it was possible that there could be "undetected" fraudulent claims along the way, but the figure would not be more than P2b million.

This was in contrast to earlier reports quoting PhilHealth Vice President Madeleine Salaya who said the government company lost about P4 billion due to fraudulent claims.

Benchmark figure

Yesterday, Salaya clarified that she was only talking about a "benchmark" figure.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III also said the quoted P4-billion figure was mere "speculation" he himself made in 2000. It refers to the possible amounts of losses or bogus claims in a span of 10 years.

Duque explained that most fraudulent claims came from primary hospitals, affecting about 3,000 hospital beds, or close to 4 percent of the 85,000 total hospital bed capacity in the country.

In announcing P4 billion, Bitonio said the just took 4 percent of the P100 billion corruption-infested income and administrative expenses of PhilHealth in the last 10 years.

He explained that this was just a reference figure used to assess if fraudulent claims were growing higher or lower.

She said that in the last few years, fraudulent claims on PhilHealth were way below 4 percent.

"I was not allowed to explain how I got the number," she told the hearings, referring to her remarks interviews during the Senate hearing.

Detecting fraud

Gozon said it could even be below 2 percent, citing only the number of cases they had so far filed. The most common modus operandi is having "ghost patients," or claiming payments for patients who were released, and declaring a longer period than the actual duration of confinement.

Duque said they were already setting up a database to detect suspicious claims in requesting reimbursements.

"(PhilHealth) is perhaps the second, if not the healthiest of all the government-owned corporations. It spent only P17 billion last year, while it collected about P20 billion," he said.

To detect fraud, Gozon said they have antifraud, arbitration and prosecution teams, all employing a total of 100 of the company's 6,000 employees.

Visayan Sea gets boost from UK reef survey

THE CENTRAL VISAYAN SEA will receive a boost in environmental preservation when the UK-based Durham University's Coral Ecosystems and Research Exploration 2007 (DU CARE 2007) arrives in the Visayan sea next month.

DU CARE will resurvey all reef check sites in the Visayan Sea from previous years to assess the level of improvement or degradation to reef health, biodiversity and statistics will pay particular attention to establishing new reef check sites, particularly in areas damaged by the recent oil spill in Guimaras Island, in order to assess the damage inflicted.

Create awareness

An important aspect of the project is awareness-building among local schools to educate students about the crucial importance of marine conservation for the fishing trade of future generations. Capabilities of local people will be enhanced in carrying out detailed anthropological surveys to gain local insights on existing conditions and the extent of local knowledge of marine conservation.

To ensure sustainability from the start, DU CARE will involve local mayors and local executives. It will engage barangay captains, government officials, the Coast Guard, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in their initiatives.

During these visits they will present the results of surveys and discuss methods already in place for preserving the seas, in addition to gathering suggestions for the future.

Improved

DU CARE 2007 combines specialist knowledge and expertise with NGO determination and grit. It is the fourth in a series of expeditions, which have been extremely successful.

In just six months, spread over three years, marine assessments have been installed in damaged areas, diving links have been established with the Coastal Dynamics Foundation (COFOU-S), public awareness of sustainable fishery and conservation efforts has increased significantly and a great improvement in the marine biodiversity of protected areas has been seen.

The results of the CDF, including links with DU CARE, has been documented by BBC Earth Stories.

14 achievers in public service honored

By Michelle V. Rosca

FOR THE SEVEN RECOGNIZED achievers in public service, the joy they derive from being government employees is more than that a high-paying corporate job can offer.

Among how her fellow 50-plus awardees from the week-long fulfillment recognition that the best is never ended doesn't stop the thought of leaving her job for greener pastures abroad, said Reinaldo C. Balbuena, who works as an operations officer in the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Balbuena is one of the seven recipients of the "Achievers in Public Service Award" given out by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) during its 39th anniversary celebration last Friday.

Aside from recognizing outstanding government employees, the premium fund for state employees also cited seven outstanding government agencies during the celebration.

The government agencies cited as Achievers in Public Service Award were: the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the National Bookstore Office, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the provincial government of Bataan, the Jose Rizal Memorial School, the local government of Davao City, and the Ateneo Elementary School in Bankerohan, Southern Leyte.

Balbuena spearheaded the operations of Patrol 117, the emergency hotline similar to the United States' 911 hotline. Patrol 117 is credited for helping prevent crime and for making emergency assistance more accessible.

Hard luck

But early one Saturday morning, assisted in the implementation of the project, she also helped in training people on the operations of the Patrol 117 call center.

"I actually finished medical technology and I could have worked abroad if I wanted to. But I opted to stay in government because of the fulfillment I get from my job," Balbuena said in Filipino.

Other extraordinary achievements that helped Balbuena get the award include the implementation of the "Barangay Local Professionalization Program" and the "Child-Friendly Local Government Program," among many others.

Before Mr. Del Rosario is another state employee whose extraordinary records in the implementation of his job is enough.

PISM saving

Del Rosario, who started out as cashier, assistant and store-room attendant before rising up the ranks to PISM auditor by 1986, is known only housekeeping. Del Rosario has been credited with helping the hospital save as much as P35 million by biding what equipment (that would have otherwise needed replacing).

"This Rosario's accomplishment contributed to the national interest of the government because it supports the austerity measure without sacrificing the quality of service being given to the patients," the GSIS said in the citation that was read during the awarding ceremony.

According to Del Rosario, knowing that he was helping in increasing the hospital's capability to serve its patients was value makes his life meaningful.

For Erlyn R. Bisnar, a level III teacher at the Albuera Tubao Elementary School in Baguio City, sharing what he knows with his charges while instilling in them the value of environmental protection is what keeps him passionate in love with his job.

Taking care of the future

"I wanted to teach children how to take care of the environment because doing so is one way to take care of their future," Bisnar said in Filipino.

Bisnar was recognized as one of the outstanding public servants for his several contributions to environment campaigns. With his leadership, the "Clean and Green Program" of the Albuera Tubao Elementary School won for the school the "Greenest Patch in the Barangay" award.

Bisnar's taught the schoolchildren proper collection, disposal and recycling of solid wastes that gave the school the reputation for being clean and green. The various initiatives that were collected were sold and the proceeds used for the repair of classrooms.

Bisnar also taught the parents and students in a project-assistance to improve the school grounds for leaf-burning trees. The seedlings were sold to the farmers and the proceeds were used to finance beautification projects and the improvement of the school's facilities.

Farmers' productivity

Carmen C. Cutinola, the agricultural officer for the local government of Pilar, Bohol, was recognized for her contributions to her farming community.

Pilar was plagued by soil erosion, a serious problem for a community heavily dependent on farming. But under Cutinola's leadership, Pilar was able to raise enough funds to support the implementation of various programs to improve farmers' productivity.

Among these were the Women's and Land Care Programs, which taught farmers how to fight soil erosion and the productivity of the "Rice Refuse-based Compost Demonstration Farm," which promoted sustainable on the use of rice-based by-products.

Cutinola is credited for helping improve the economic condition of her community enough for Pilar to be lifted from 4th-class municipality to 5th-class municipality status.

Arelie C. Jardeleza, a public school nurse in the Sangay district of La Union, is one of four school nurses Although she could very well have simplified her job by catering only to the students who visited her school clinic, Arelie expanded the feeding programs to school supplementation.

"Many of our nurses are going abroad, but I wanted to feel the same desire knowing many children in my community were in need of health and education assistance," Arelie said.

By presenting her proposed health programs to non-governmental and private citizens, Arelie was able to generate much-needed funds.

She helped in the implementation of the feeding program in 19 schools in Sangay and helped raise funds for the surgery of poor students.

Visiting poor kids

According to colleagues, Arelie devotes much of her time to visiting poor children living in far-flung barangay, walking through mountain trails that cars and jeeps cannot reach to various.

Melinda Wenceslao is a social welfare assistant at the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Davao province. With his knowledge of plant propagation and herbal remedies, he developed very useful rehabilitation programs for drug dependents receiving these herbals.

Fernandez spearheaded the installation of an "orchidarium" in the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Drug Dependents in Bago, Davao City. His project was cited as one of the best therapies for rehabilitating drug dependents.

He was also instrumental in the reuniting of young drug dependents at a rehabilitation center in Bago Oshiro, Davao City, enabling general body organic farming and rearing of chickens.

He also prepared a project proposal on the "Training of Orchard Owning and Supervisors, and trained drug dependent minors in tree-farming techniques and the use of reliable accessories and tools.

The last recipient of the Achievers in Public Service Award is Nilda C. del Rosario, an educational supervisor in the Department of Education division in Davao City.

Del Rosario spearheaded a fund-raising project to finance building structures for schoolchildren in Davao City.

She also led in raising funds for the improvement of the facilities of the Sta. Ana Elementary School, such as the upgrading of school-site equipment. Del Rosario is also credited with initiating the Science Festival at the Sta. Ana Elementary School, which helped in promoting interest in science among the students.

Del Rosario, who has been a teacher for the past 22 years starting with an annual salary of P36,000, wrote and published science teaching modules for elementary students to relate services in our society to science topics in them.

"That [small salary] did not bother me because I really love educating the children. If you enjoy your job, money will not matter to much. You will not realize that along the way, God will provide you with the things you need," she said.

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System handshakes "Achievers in Public Service Awards" to seven state employees and seven state agencies in its recent 39th-anniversary celebration on May 11. At left, Jennifer Dacay-Abad, Ayala-VI scholar, and Patricia A. Magallanes, head teacher III, of the Pililak Elementary School of Academics, Southern Leyte, receive the award for the school. Above are representatives of the 7 state agency awardees.

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Barbarians at the gate

IN HIS VALEDICTORY BEFORE THE SENATE, RALPH Recto made a political forecast pregnant with meaning. "Barbarians will soon appear at the gate to tear this institution down. Believe me, they shall not pass." He was referring, of course, to the Senate, and the often-discussed possibility that after the May election, the administration would revive its efforts to abolish the Senate.

Recto confirmed that this is, indeed, what the country should expect.

EDITORIAL

The ultimate decision point in any move to change the Constitution is a plebiscite—an election. But after our most recent election—one that bluntly has to be called a disgrace—what are the prospects of a plebiscite being conducted efficiently, much less credibly? Very slim, indeed. But if there is one thing this country can ill-afford, it's a plebiscite on par, in terms of disreputableness, as the rigged Marcos-era referenda.

Benjamin Abalos has already been compared—by erstwhile supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo in media, no less—as being on par with Leonardo Perez. The Marcos-era Comelec chair went down in history as an official who was notoriously unable to count. So that reason, we've suggested that Abalos and his fellow commissioners should do the country a favor and resign. It will already be tough enough to put together the leadership, time, equipment and training required for credible polls in 2010 without them adding to the problems.

The task takes an even greater urgency if it becomes clear the administration wants Charter change sooner rather than later. Having bungled the May 2007 election, a plebiscite, whether at the end of this year, to coincide with the barangay elections, or sometime next year, with our without Abalos (who retires in February 2008) would in effect become a substitute for the May 2010 polls. For in that referendum would be decided the future course of the country.

Recto's choice of words to describe those he foresees as working for the abolition of the Senate is apt. The candidates who preferred ballots over bullets, bribery over an honest vote, electoral chicanery rather than respect for the true will of the people, are barbarians. They represent forces and interests diametrically opposed to everything our democratic project aspires to: the will of the majority, but not at the expense of the rights of any minority; a society in which civics matters, and where civilization stands for something other than brute force and the politics of plunder.

The energies of the Comelec, the Department of Justice, even the electoral tribunals of both Houses of Congress, would be better off spent rooting after the perpetrators and beneficiaries of electoral malpractices, including fraud. We have learned to add that the defining characteristic of our political system is that old, and tragic, adage about guns, bandits and votes. There is no incentive to campaign honorably, and for candidates and voters to obey the law, because the men who win tend to be those who flout the law.

There have been enough allegations made in this election for an administration and a Comelec even remotely interested in restoring confidence in our institutions to start filing cases without fear or favor. Enough individuals have been caught red-handed breaking electoral laws, for prosecution to begin and taken to their logical conclusion. These require neither the consent of Congress nor the blessings of political parties nor even the support of the people. The only thing required is for officials to take their oath of office seriously, and harness the powers given them by the law.

Big fish and little fish—all must be caught, wriggling and squirming, in the same net. And the last dictator that the Comelec must be the one to cast that net. There will be citizens' groups aplenty willing to provide testimony. One fundamental lesson of this election was that whether it was the PPCRV or Lente or Namfrel, the citizenry did its part, and admirably so. Such civic-consciousness deserves better than to have the martyrs of those organizations (recall the PPCRV volunteers, in particular, who died to the line of duty leaving a concerned public to pass the hat to lend assistance to their bereaved families) die for nothing.

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Lim to open Mendiola to demonstrators

POLICE AND STUDENT RALLIERS CLASH-ED again at Mendiola last Monday. The students were protesting the increase in tuition fees; the police were trying to disperse them because earlier they had burned in Recoletos, which is just a few blocks from Malacañang.

Students should be patient and wait. In a few weeks, Mendiola will be opened to them by the City of Manila and they can hold rallies there to their hearts' content. Gen. Alfredo Lim, who will take over as mayor of Manila in exactly 30 days, said the fugitive ex-Manila bus conductor that he will open again to demonstrators historic Mendiola. He said anybody can hold rallies there and no equally historic Plaza Miranda is any more of day or night, as long as they have a permit.

There are places here from the time of many important—and sometimes violent—rallies in the past. Plaza Miranda was bombed during a rolling de manos during the Marcos regime and the fugitive ex-Manila bus conductor, including former Senate President Jovito Salonga, were seriously injured. Mendiola was the site of the massacre of farmers by soldiers in a protest rally during the Aquino administration.

Presidents Ramon Magsaysay, since he had to make a decision on a controversial matter, wanted the query, "Can we defend this at Plaza Miranda?"

* * *

Teachers and students of Jose Abad Santos [no School in Tondo held their own demonstration last Monday the first day of school. They were protesting their transfer to new school buildings in the old Numancia compound at the end of Evangelista Street, just off Juan de. They don't want to move as the new site because it is far from their homes. They have to take two jeepneys rides to get there, whereas they take only one to the old site. Besides, they have to pass through a squatter colony and they are afraid the students would be hijacked.

Senators Lito and Loren Legarda-Maclingal, over at Manila congressmen and councilors rushed there early Monday morning because of the protests, interesting media people. I noticed that the school buildings were not yet finished. It seemed rushed to move to those sites.

So why do they want to use them down? Because a land developer wants to get hold of the three hectares' campus. Megaworld is going to build a shopping mall and residential condominiums on the site of the school buildings. Megaworld did not even pay cash for the property owned by the city of Manila. According to Lim, the lot is worth P1,200 per sq m.

Instead of cash, Megaworld is paying for the property by giving some of the resident lot units in the condominium to the city government and by constructing new school buildings in the Numancia compound. These buildings are now finished.

Lim said the deal was supposed to be a win-win—not an ambulance—by the city council, to provide disadvantageous to the city government and the

Acting as if nothing happened

THE MOST TERRIFYING QUESTION DELAYED: A supposed crusade that the Genuine Opposition (GO) candidates had worked 2-1/2 to the bones elections was set aside, only to descend Pandora-like on us in showdown home to Team Buzz, those the division of spoils. Up for grabs are the Senate presidency and chairmanships of key committees. Press newspaper reports show you noticed that the senators, on the basis of, simply, thought of overhauling the national policy agenda) beyond just carving up the loaves.

The celebration with Estrada was symbolic and compromise of the opposition's view of the senatorial race with the people on May 14. What's more, the senators-elect, by the way, are Estrada's new house, they offered the GO senators of the Senate as complete to Estrada and as an acknowledgment of Estrada's view that the election was a referendum on the Administration of his contribution by Illocandia and his successor-defender that got.

The opposition cannot be more wrong than rendering Estrada for the GO victory in the Senate election. Some of them may not like to admit the GO senatorial bid picked Estrada's ticket. But the senatorial candidates of the slate of the GO candidates were also identified as Estrada-ites and Estrada partisans, and presented themselves as independent-minded senators. The only mental cleared by candidates of the team was all senatorial candidates.

The GO senators-elect are not the creation of the Estrada Arroyo political vendetta. That fund was not the consideration team. The voters decided as senators of issues that have emerged to define the character of the Arroyo administration since 2001. The contest has revealed a huge disunion for the people across. Consequently, Estrada cannot claim credit for influencing the 8-12 Senate election result. Much less a lot in opposition to call the shots in the administered power under new license.

The senate election results—for the Senate, the House and the local posts—have left an undue

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

mandate for either the administration or the opposition. The mandate is open to several interpretations about what the administration and the opposition have to do in the remaining three years of this government. The mandate is unified on one thing: the Senate and House of Representatives.

The results, moreover, does. The administration lost control of the Senate, but remained in majority in the House, winning more than 200 seats in the 250-member House, which they expect to remain in. But the same election results could turn it over to majority dominated by Lakas-CMD in the emerging Congress. Lakas' dominance is threatened by the resurgence of Kampi, the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino, which gained 46 seats. The joint force gathered at the base of the coalition forcing Lakas-CMD, Kampi and Eddie Gil Jesus-ger's Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), which held control 46 seats.

The May elections, in which the President was not up for reelection, was to reflect what she called Bill of the Senate was up for election. The other half of the polls, invited the House. For the purpose of reversing the national policy agenda, it is the Senate election outcome that is more crucial. The House election, and the Senate results reflect more authentically the national mood. Thus, the administration has retained a lowly test of confidence in the results of the election for House seats, and the opposition claims a triumph in seizure and reverse poles on issues on which the opposition positions the administration.

The results, moreover, does. The administration lost control of the Senate, but remained in majority in the House, winning more than 200 seats in the 250-member House, which they expect to remain in. But the same election results could turn it over to majority dominated by Lakas-CMD in the emerging Congress. Lakas' dominance is threatened by the resurgence of Kampi, the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino, which gained 46 seats. The joint force gathered at the base of the coalition forcing Lakas-CMD, Kampi and Eddie Gil Jesus-ger's Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), which held control 46 seats.

The May elections, in which the President was not up for reelection, was to reflect what she called Bill of the Senate was up for election. The other half of the polls, invited the House. For the purpose of reversing the national policy agenda, it is the Senate election outcome that is more crucial. The House election, and the Senate results reflect more authentically the national mood. Thus, the administration has retained a lowly test of confidence in the results of the election for House seats, and the opposition claims a triumph in seizure and reverse poles on issues on which the opposition positions the administration.

It is a disarming that under the opposition, if ever it can find its way out speaking with an alternative policy agenda, nor the government has recognized that the initial results for both the Senate and House elections are a mandate to restore and revise the policy agenda and priorities.

The last seven spots which policy reversal can be made in the Senate are the blue ribbon committees, foreign relations committee, finance and economic affairs, public services, energy, and justice and human rights. These are the committees that demand the issues on which the course for control of the Senate was fought and decided.

It is arguably debatable for the administration but not elusive any sign of being chastened or humbled by the Senate election results. There's not a hint of a Cabinet change to signal its readiness to make a clean start after a devastating defeat. The way is clear for administration one do it is to move on with such a time-type—as of nothing happened on May 14.

It's obvious that the race for House speaker has engulfed Sabling Garcia, even if it would mean the death of a well-deserved reformist Speaker Pedrito Nograles.

But Nograles, the third-term bar eldest boy of the eight Garcia siblings, says that a concerted drive before to run again for Congress "because when he finished his last term as governor he promised to his constituents."

The eldest Garcia laughs at this, but aside in agreement. He has more than enough worries, after all, to enjoy this current political season. All's well in the world of the Garcias. In contrast to their previous experience of electoral 2004, Team is emerging back into office enjoying an unprecedentable mandate and thus to pursue her own agenda for governance. Pablo, from a midday life debut on the national stage, a debut that could be unleashed by the powerful clout of his father role as speakership, and Pinoy and Pedi, in his successful inclusion, he's riding high on the second economic achievements of the former government and, as part of the President's reelection team, he's instantly a photo with a sense of accomplishment.

Not just a grudge fight

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"We have our team against Ito Senator," the eldest Garcia explains, while his son Pablo nearby seems more willing to go into details about the "grudge match." He cites the case between the Speaker and underdog of Lakas, to which the latter previously owed their allegiance, without all over their alliance and support and other candidates, including the son of former Senator Sabling Garcia's first reported governor.

"That we're also running against the speakership for considerations of principles," adds Pablo Lobo. There is a feeling, apparently, especially within the business community, that the Senate is the source of political instability in the country. It was from the Senate floor that Senator Ito de Garcia siblings sounded the Speaker's many faces caused the defeat of the administration Senate lineup with his withdrawal and ill advised pursuit of Harvey charge; "and we all know what happened after that," he says. Even Garcia's belief that "the Speaker has been using the threat of impeachment as a way to make the President beholden to him."

OTHER members of the House, though, have spoken out against other moves to thwart a forceful fight for the post of Speaker. Since House elections do not take effect before June in the challenge for speakership becomes the issue by then held, it would mean going both the House leadership and the Senate opposition to the biggest pre-adolescent mess yesterday.

The situation, says opposition Representative Alex Bichet Rodriguez, is "highly unrealistic," since with only 28 members in the House "there is no way the 'genuine' opposition can muster enough votes" to place its ideal place in the race

for speaker. Rodriguez called the a contest of all pro-administration parties to be decided on a single candidate for speakership during them. The question, he said, would do likewise, and thereby ensure that the post of mines by floor leader would indoctrinating to the anti-opposition and minority in the House.

Still, the way the Garcia father and siblings were talking this evening, it seemed clear they meant to stay neutral in adopting him part in a "no-to-race" for speaker nor to block the opposition from taking any leadership role in the House. But they're also hedging their bets a bit, in case they have to "choose" between their loyalties and the support of the Pwersa for the speakership before a final contest for the post three years from now.

Garcia siblings and would even demand democracy—the contest of which is giving a voice and a choice to everyone—all the better.

Comments are welcome at rjimenez@inquirer.com.ph

A broader perspective of history

LOOKING BACK

Andreah R. Gonzales

"IN THE PHILIPPINES history is not an industry when the curriculum prescribes, there's died a little more enlightened than the person it served or understanded in the studies. But as a nation, I imagine that it is my constant obligation to live with the one but wonderful history and heritage and enhance rather than be outdated textbook. I also receive e-mail from reporters in Filipino who try to keep in touch with their roots through history. A group of PR Asia, who is to publicly stand on simplicity, to continued confused history when people brought such thing to the attention of the Founding Fathers.

I want to share in a small way by history lesson in your little brain pool, who is taking up grade-school and high school. Here's a little bit of history.

"I just recently read a couple of your earlier issues the blue on the Spanish Conquistos and the attention conduct of the first Philippine elections. I find a disquieting the there is a general assumption of the validity of these documents as the founding of our republic. Thinking back to my under-graduate Kasaysayang Pilipino, I realize that I am fortunate to have been presented with alternative perspective of both sides of the story, so one might say that much of what I discovered about Philippine history during my undergraduate days was from the hard school of the traditional classroom. I learned the causes of Bonifacio's tantrums, and later, how would Aguinaldo proved into the struggle for power and personality into the founding of the Republic.

they must back-bottom of their respective revolutions, it was a logical, analogous step in his mind. Aguinaldo proudly said, and suspect he knew mostly says. He died before there became a Philippines republic. And he says sadly, 'Oh, there were one more hero died here in the war,' and I reply just as sadly, 'Yes, in a different kind of battle, sir.' I thought about how confusing it would be for him to hear that it was a fellow Filipino who was killing how, and how it was two who killed that he was demanded of a war in the leadership of the Filipinos. So I simply answer, 'Yes.'

But I will turn silently. Here would, and I am sure is, the case in the future that I will not be around to see it. I will not be even the end. I will see for your history. For here you can learn from his past if he does not know of it? How can we hope for a brighter future if we keep ourselves in the dark about the past?

"So I applaud you, sir, for going against the tide including pains to re-educate in Filipinos on our own history. I hope that you students will also realize how much that is in the content of our present life's choices and future-building.

"I'm a history major myself, and I enjoyed your musings and how you managed to engage my mind in historical discussion which I am a student scientist by training, although we haven't met, you usually unequipped a copy of Rizal Philippines and Philippine Revolution in your hands, through my mother, Lety, whose you met in some conference. I think, I will say my fervent hope up with your columns. I thank you for providing us with a link to our heritage and homeland."

I often wonder whether it is all right to present a different view of history than is how academia is disturbing. Readers' responses have given me the answer.

Comments are welcome at rjimenez@inquirer.com.ph

'Graciosa'

"CAN WE LOOK IF THERE TWO UNITS?" I ASKED THE cell phone vendor. I was in Greenhills with a friend and each of us had opened to use this hotshot latest craze.

The clerk frowned and said, "You are lying. Let's do it once in a time." Fair enough, I thought, maybe she'd had people running off with the phones, but I felt her voice could have been more congenial.

So, she pulled out one unit to show my friend, and after he

PINOY KASI

Michael J. Tee

was through, I took out the other unit and let her look at it. I wasn't really that interested, partly thanks to all the last demonstrations I'd quickly scanned the text to her with a "Nah, wa."

She smirked and muttered, "Anong ang iyon to. Pilipino a wala ng ibang gawa."

BE I kept smirked me nervously, knowing how I had shown inappropriate, but I figured, it's the end of a long day and I'll just let it go at that.

Enthusiasm

"Graciosa," I found when she was home and on the friend, she's interesting asked what is the meaning of "graciosa." I remembered, and to get another blank look. And I realized—that is, every existing name pronunciation of suspension Filipinos.

You see it all around you in the way people pick proposals as they try to get through a crowd, clerks who can't say change from a ten, people who cannot pick the phone with "Yun a yun!" pronunciations that won't look or you in any sentence because, all this is going to be disastrous, considering how our economy depends so much on pronunciation. We have millions of Filipinos working overseas, many in economic-driven guesthouses is essential. And frankly, we seem to produce workers call centers, restaurant villages, not most manager Filipinos I said I see quite a few video once as well have to some of great success.

I'm talking about more than the good manners and right conduct one has set pushed up to school. It's also more than the accepted "good enough," and "that's all that matters to be doing more to make and more, done so mediocrity that might as well be growing a school of low-achievers unlikely.

Graciosa-ness means the little extras that go a long way, like "thank you" and the smile, even for the most routine of tasks done, like "please" and "sir/ma'am" for the waiter. Graciosa-ness means the little extra effort to make sure that small, life-making an effort to move down to a customer to hand over an object, rather than hurling it to's hospitality—plus, a way of saying "that's special," saying birds how to make someone feel special, like a valued friend. It's also the pimping you sold to the shoulders—thank you, Tito Gabi, who whips up the richest calcium of.

Class

We need to think that graciousness comes with being upper class. Not quite. Sometimes a very much driven to the street-smart, and I've seen it in the poorest parts of the city, the Smokedale Dandal), where people welcome you into their homes, give you their best room yet, for very poor families, their best thing to sleeping mats), daughter their only chicken to pig and when you try to stop them explaining that you regard as your kindness, they look at you as though they take one their one and only can of curne were beyond belief. Graciousness means going out of your way to help, and that's from all manner, particularly the country, but for some reason to someone's home and you automatically have a guide to explain they you to that place, even if it's five or six minutes—that's the kind of thing that makes a difference.

So, why are we losing this graciousness? Surely it's urban life eating away into our soul. It's survival in cities, we think, we need to be tough and be mean.

But I'm realizing, too, the sin goes back to when Filipinos began to think of "class" as a matter of "breeding" and wearing their pants, landlords threatened proper etiquette and had some degree of graciousness, but treated lesser mortals, which was 95 percent of the Philippine population, it was poor and insubordinated treatment.

I had friends who worked at flight attendants in Philippines that were rude and unfriendly to Filipinos and friendly, called and flashy, they had scolded with wannabe fraternities, who would log in luxury lounge which they would disparage the them. Heaven a "please," never a "pasibog" from the haughty passengers, the attendants were expected to know that they should like the back of their hands, the overhead bins—and to say thank you for the privilege.

You see it, too, at school—not the helpers, who have mastered, through imitation, the imperial tones and habits of their masters, but even in parents who abuse the service industry, who point out their children's mistakes in the young children they're raising for. When their young point out the mistakes from the waitress for, the parents wonder why they became that way.

Eventually, that lack of graciousness, combined with classconsciousness, spread like a virus, transforming us into paragons of rudeness. And the poorest can it, the street can get the best of it, and the middle class can get the worst of it. And so, as the income group they came to, the more unpleasant the tasks they do, hence, unrewarded and suspicious of their customers because they are rich and might steal the goods.

Like the wind

I try to understand where consumer is impressions because of a long day's work, but, whenever possible, I take time to say with them—graciously, sometimes with a bit of coaxing—because I know that if I should call them unconscious their hours, they would eventually offered someone less tolerant, and then would cut them down.

That doesn't mean that you can be careful even with the nurses and the service because a service them, give them even more service as they wonder if you're preparing to take no-no against them—very graciously, of course. And sometimes they're right.

"Graciosa," the Chinese word for service, reaches us only as far as we allow. Here like this word. To demonstrate, the such a few steps to emphasize the importance of being light-hearted, then opened and that a door ever so carefully. It's more than politeness," she explained, "it's respecting others, being conscious that you don't end up doing big others. Graciousness is also understanding of our object, and expression of our respect for its value.

Society involves graciousness—it can be taught, eventually becoming embedded, assuming it becomes part of our body, reflected in our speech, our gait, our facial expressions, our level of energy, and in the way we, all our movements come together to give to what we call in Filipino "dating," the impact we have on people. It's never self, as when we "behave" only because we have to. Whether it is contrived, as when politicians perform, Never classical, never scripted, graciousness overlaps people because it emanates from a choreography of the heart.

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'Kotongan' at PAL terminal

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE ROLE OF the policemen loitering around the exit area of Philippine Airlines' terminal? As we were about to exit the plaza, two cops took our baggage claim stubs and pretended to inspect the baggage. One warned (more) tmd asked for a "tip." We ignored him. Meanwhile, the real PAL staff just looked on with indifference and did nothing.

When we managed to move on, there we the cat, another set of PAL staff in uniform asked for our claim stubs (again) to compare with the stubs on our baggage. They asked us to go back to the cops and claim our stubs which, she says, kept in their possession. This happened May 9 at 10:30, upon our arrival from Honolulu, PR 101. The PAL staff and the cops assigned around this time in that area should be investigated and should be made to answer for the "extra services" they were rendering to the passengers.

Moreover, a domestic flight at its best, I handed the lady at the entrance five centavos a PC,000 bill to pay for four boarding passes for two passengers. The gave me back P000. She weighed all the tickets together with the boarding passes in our hands. As we were through the X-ray inspection area, the people doing it ignored our "travelling passes, too. But when we were boarded, a man came running to us demanding another P200 because there were only three, not four, tickets in the.

We didn't have the chance to complain because the plane was ready to leave. Before departure, ignoring the missing ticket stub until the last minute to we can't complain to the lady who made P200 by taking in one ticket less and to the man who made P200 for getting paid without giving us a ticket.

How many more are being victimized by this scam and how much money are the people being conned out of?

—BRUCE M. JONES, rigel70@wells.com

LETTERS

Main cause of decline in English proficiency among Filipino youth

MOST EDUCATED PEOPLE—AND there are studies that support this—first use most items his/her mother tongue before only years before he/she should my learning to speak in any other language.

The medium of instruction from some schools may be a factor in developing our students' and graduates' proficiency in English. I believe, however, that the main reason for the decline in English proficiency among our young is that they spend more time watching TV or playing video games than reading.

I cannot agree actual studies here, but, from observation, I think our youth, in general, learn/use their native tongue among the young.

—LINELLE ESCANTILLA-LARET, lmlla_1@yahoo.com

Tattered flags

I HOPE THE OFFICIALS OF THE government agencies holding office in the Antiem Building along Makati Avenue, Makati City, will take time to look up the front panels of the building and see the dismal and shameful condition of the two Philippine flags hanging on two poles.

It appears that both flags were already hit by typhoon "Milenyo" last year.

It is a shame that no one from any of the government agencies in that building has bothered to replace whatever remains of the flags hanging there. Is this an obvious indication of our lack of patriotism?

—EDGAR FLORES, roman_manood@yahoo.com

THE BURNT remains of the schoolhouse in Tayum

Teachers should not be exposed to election violence

FIVE TEACHERS WOULD rather skip poll duties is hardly news. Insofar as I (as many others) will raising this issue, after the election?

Because, with every election, serving as election inspector is becoming more and more a dangerous task, because the failure to remove the monikers from such a task is growing louder and louder.

The hacking of ballot boxes and a subsidiarizer in Datu Saudagan, where a teacher and two poll watchers died in that incident, proved all the more this chance to be more justified.

Like many Filipinos, I am sad, dismayed and shattered by the incidents. I practice call for the immediate removal of the monikers from the election. The perpetrators of this dastardly act—obviously, the warring factions and hired goons—must be arrested and brought to justice.

—JEAN L. BACHACON, G/F Isabel Bldg. 1, Luray Subdivision, Urdaneta Village Street, Baguio City 2600

Bolante remembered in 2007 campaign-spending spree

UNLIKELY BUT AS EDITORIAL, which answered that the installation of the Senate "matters, precisely because it plays a key role in our democracy" implies that the senate, of all our institutions, and not eminently active—is not engaged in democracy. I find this view quite disturbing.

True, a number of high-profile cases involving the DOJ and—to a large extent, the alleged misuse by Malacañang of our civil liberties. And there demonstrated by senate, individually and/or collectively, in their chambers. That senate can act as a counterweight to the executive is hardly surprising at all, given the time function of the branch of government.

But we should ask ourselves: is this all of what is left of Philippine politics? What about the politics of governance and the accountability of the former to play a key role in bringing about stability and economic progress in our country? Are the senators the true representatives of the people?

Without assistance of IP Rodrigo and former professor Merching, we is right in saying that every senator is bereft of party identification. Party lines are meaningless in the context of the "Team Malacañang" such that the Senate has become a dysfunctional institution. Each one for himself is their aim; each of the senators who sees himself as an independent power.

Members of the opposition are putting themselves on the hook for their statements (and deeds) every day for what reason? Remember the last two elections for these seats?

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been a bird in de sandy things. He had elected superman-senators with their big cinch-nose. But the bird flew away before they knew it.

It is sad to see the high-level senate seats launched as "fuel" Ubilla campaign machinery in 2004; that's P20 million gone into fuel, and the combined presidential and senatorial campaign spending in 2004 amounted to unsuggesting P1.2 billion.

In the 2007 elections, the campaigning-spending machinery remains evident. So what else is new? An opportunist Senator herding the sweepstakes, and the people's literary being wasted in their endless musings as we each other to—

—FRANK CARAOS, fpcaraos@yahoo.com

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Revive Charter change as country's only hope

THE 2007 MIDTERM ELECTIONS SHOWED that the administration is strong at the local, congressional and provincial levels but weak at the national level. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's senatorial candidates have clearly been repudiated. Now, see, the alarming expanding military representation in the Senate. Rodolfo Biazon, Panfilo Lacson, Gregorio Honasan and former Senators... Former soldiers and coup d'etat, latter, the platform for a military coup. Combined with the Senate-backed candidates bankrolling for people power and procurement to opposition blocks, we should expect political upheavals in the immediate future.

Political instability in the Philippines corresponding to a prize who can oppose the GMA-backed with of a wealthy-leaning lord, the end of the Aquinos's five-decade rule of Marcos and the end of many political dynasties, we can say that the midterm generally worst term personality of Philippine democracy. Thus, the lingering challenge to shift to a parliamentary form of government, which the Senate and political dynasties oppose.

We can no longer further postpone the shift to a parliamentary system. Before the 2010 elections, the country needs to be united and headed off the looming upheavals brought about by the endless bickering in a presidential system, a form of government that has failed us and our country, now dubbed as the most corrupt in Asia. It is time for all such meaning Filipinos to pause, think and do something to heal the country's divisive, economic, social and political wounds.

The new Congress is mostly, critically and historically bound to convene not Constituent, but as bar-based for energy and reform of the country. Congress is amending our Constitution, it will be an enlightening experience for Filipinos to work together as a people, to pull together for the common good and set aside political ambitions...the primes of convention and the constitution of the street as a people.

With the shift to a parliamentary system, a system preferred by over 114 countries worldwide, we might yet see that we are a country so blessed with so much bounty from the Almighty, that in peace and unity, so-they-can-share-it-all-over-the-indomitable-spirit of the Filipino people.

The parliamentary system is the only hope of our country for political unity, peace, unity and progress.

—FRANCISCO DUJANA, Executive Director, Social Policy Advocacy, 13 Charleyville St., White Plains, Quezon City

Killing the hospitals softly with a foolish law

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID AND WRITTEN about the exodus of health care professionals to other countries (also known as "brain drain"). The concern has reopened on the likes of St. Elmo Antista, the medical board topnotcher who chose to work as a nurse in the United States, and on Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan's study on how many physicians have chosen the same path, and how some hospitals are closing down for lack of doctors and nurses to man them.

It was everyone's hope that, given all the hype the media gave the problem, lawmakers might take notice and step in to remedy the situation. But, alas, three senators, Manuel Villar, Pia Cayetano and Serge Osmeña, decided to further add insult to injury by passing a law already positioned to drive down to an already ailing industry.

Privately hospital administrators bosses on their bill, saying that, on the average, only one out of 10 patients refuses to pay their bills; some of them even refuse to accept addresses to these hospitals, it is the practice to ask the patients prior to admission, whether he could afford to stay there, or would opt to be referred to a government hospital for further treatment in case he/she/they cannot afford it.

What would now stop a patient from choosing a suite in a private hospital, say, St. Luke's or Makati Medical, instead of lining up in a crowded state hospital? After all, he just has to issue a promissory note...and so far as I know, promissory notes include honoring checks are not yet included in "final" amendments. But even if it were so, the time and cost of litigation alone would be too much for the hospitals.

What's next? Will they allow hungry people to eat at any restaurants and simply submit a promissory note? I believe not, and we should not allow businessmen folks to check in-n-out operations to favor and, some check out time, just sign a promissory note? After all, food and shelter, like health, are also basic needs.

Senior hospital owners are suggesting a hospital holiday in protest of this law. The Department of Health says that it has yet to come up with the implementing guidelines to implement the law and will hold dialogues with hospital owners before finalizing the guidelines.

Well, I have a suggestion. Most patients in have hospitals with promissory notes, but if they don't pay up within a week, charge their bills with interest at the prime lending rate of the banks. If there is no longer enough room to, charge the bills to the personal accounts of Villar, Cayetano and Osmeña.

—NICHOLAS GONZALES, nmgon21@yahoo.com

Across the NATION

Mindanao troops on high terror alert

A SOLDIER on election duty keeps watch at the Isabela-Lanao highway. His role will resort to fighting terrorism as a result of a US alert.

KIDAPAWAN CITY—GOVERNMENT SECURITY forces are bracing for a possible wave of terror attacks after the United States and Australia warned that al-Qaida-affiliated militants were planning to bomb bus terminals and public markets in Mindanao.

Policemen and soldiers have tightened security in and out of the city, putting up checkpoints and deploying troops following the US' terror alert reports.

Maj. Randolph Cabangbang, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command, told the Inquirer that three former, yet alleged Jemaah Islamiyah members said to be behind the recent bombings in Central Mindanao, facilitated the training on bomb-making of fresh recruits in the village of Limaituganan in Midsayap, Cotabato, Magpaminsang, central Mindanao.

"Their training went on for eight days starting May 18," Cabangbang said.

Ostrat is on Washington's list of countries said to harbor a bounty of $50,000 (P2.4 million).

Ubaida is said to be a former member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) but the anti-secessionist group has distanced him (Ubaida) from its being blamed for the bombings that killed eight people and wounded dozens of others, including that in Makilala town in North Cotabato in October last year.

In a warning message on June 2, the United States said it received information that the bombings would likely be here and nearby Makilala in the area town in Davao.

The warning, posted on the US Embassy webpage, said the American had information about the possible bomb attacks.

"The embassy has information that terrorists may be planning to carry out bombings in bus terminals and public market places in Kidapawan City) and Makilala in North Cotabato, Mindanao over the next several days," it said.

"US citizens should exercise extreme caution in Central Mindanao ... US citizens living and working in Central Mindanao are urged to examine their personal security and to keep a low profile, and should avoid public gathering places," it added.

The Australian government, on the other hand, said possible targets included places of worship, restaurants, shopping malls, hotels, hostels, guesthouses, bars or clubs frequented by foreigners, including but not limited to the cities of Davao, Koronadal, Cotabato, Cagayan de Oro, General Santos, Surallah and Digos, and the towns of Tacurong, Isulan and Maguindanao.

A day after the warning was issued, government troops foiled a bomb attack when a powerful improvised explosive device left in only river was discovered by civilians and later defused by engineers in a public terminal in Tulunan, Cotabato.

The bomb was made up of about a kilogram of secondary powder placed inside a pitcher that was packed with jagged metal fragments and tipped with a battery-operated, time-delay blasting device.

Lt. Col. Julieto Nafe, 4th Infantry Division spokesperson, said military commanders were directed to check information that Zulkifli bin Abdul Hir (Marwan), also known as Commander Mauloma, allegedly a key operative in the JI cell responsible for the 2002 Bali bomb attack in which 202 people died—was hiding in Central Mindanao.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said over 300 rebel troops and spies had been deployed to monitor and arrest Zulkifli.

Zulkifli, allegedly heads the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (or other group and) is a member of the JI's central command Jemaah Ariy Mazlom and Adhan Fatah, Inquirer Mindanao

Ifugao names forest park after slain US volunteer

BAGUIO CITY—IFUGAO OFFICIALS were silent throughout the ceremony that accompanied the transfer of US Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell to Sunnese town in April.

But the province finally made its sentiments clearer to Campbell's fellow Peace Corps volunteers on Sunday when the community of Barangay Poblo in Asipulo, Ifugao, dedicated 11 hectares of forest land to Campbell, a former journalist, and Dustin Boyles, 24, a volunteer assigned in the province.

About 21 Peace Corps volunteers, their Filipino coordinators and their staff converged in Barangay Poblo with Asipulo officials and members to celebrate Environment Day in Campbell's honor. Environment Day is officially celebrated on June 5.

Boyles said the residents adopted a concept he drew up about forging a livelihood project in Campbell's honor, which would also help feed the villagers.

The people responded by donating the land they would develop into an agro-forestry park, said Boy Dangayan, provincial program coordinator of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The town is piloting a US$50K, supported social development and population management program. But was started in 2005 and will last until 2009. The program has made the "Campbell Park" a key feature of the projects, Dangayan told the Inquirer.

He said it was the community's way of making up for Campbell's death. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Guimaras folk warned on fake payment letter

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—AN INTERNATIONAL agency in charge of settling claims for oil spill damages has warned about a fake letter supposedly informing a second batch of claimants that payment was ready.

The International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund and local officials issued the warning to Guimarasnons.

"The IOPC said the letter is a fake and that the signature was a forgery," said Rafael Cuenillana, provincial assessor for Western Visayas and head of the regional task force. Solar 1 Oil Spill, quoting Patrick Joseph, IOPC claims manager.

Cuenillana said the IOPC claims office in Guimaras got hold of a copy of the letter sent to barangay leaders on the island after they tried to verify the notice.

The one-page letter dated May 18 informed the barangay chairs that the payment for the second batch of claimants for pollution damages resulting from the August 2006 oil spill would be released starting this month.

The letter, purportedly signed by IOPC Deputy Director Joe Bachelet, instructed the claimants to bring valid identification cards and residence certificates.

Cuenillana said that Joseph had informed him that no payments were possible this month because the IOPC was still validating more than 100,000 claim forms submitted by the second batch.

The IOPC has finished examining the forms but have not started validating the claims, said Cuenillana. He said that only 2,000 forms were found to have been duly accomplished, while the rest were set aside because they lacked information.

The IOPC earlier issued checks to over five large number of claimants in the second batch.

It said the number of claimants, included the 13,480 already paid, was already 80 percent of the total population of Guimaras.

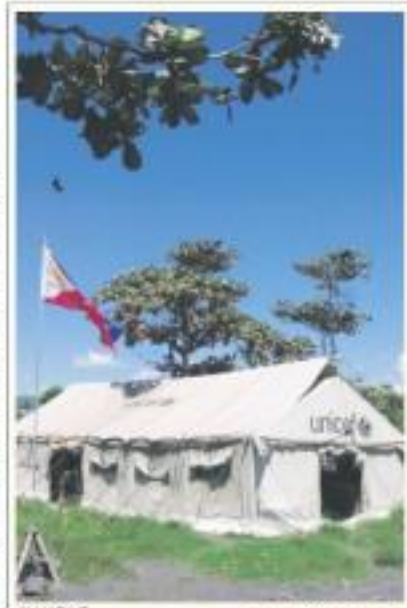
The oil spill could affect a large number of residents, it said.

Cuenillana said he could not yet explain the problems of the fake letter and who was responsible for it.

"What could be the motive and who will benefit from this?" he asked.

Last year, the IOPC paid almost P136.5 million to more than 11,000 residents of Guimaras whose livelihoods were harmed after the leak until on Aug. 12, spilling 2.1 million liters of bunker fuel it was transporting for Petron from Bataan to Zamboanga. The entities each got from P6,000 to P32,000.

The IOPC also paid P12,798,614 to 809 residents of Sibunag, a village of Iloilo City and P57 million to some 11,000 claimants of Iloilo province.



CLASS TENT
This tent serves as classroom for 120 students of the Maipon Elementary School, which was relocated to Barangay Buenavista, Guimaras town in Aklan, when half of the old school was buried by mudflow from Mount Nalusuan at the height of Supertyphoon "Reming" last year. Both students and teachers are complaining of too much heat and dust in the tents.

More students enrolled but few classrooms, teachers

CUBAMPO CITY—Education officials in Central Mindanao said in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao have confirmed the soaring number of enrollees this year, a problem compounded by the lack of classrooms, textbooks and teachers.

In Central Mindanao, which consists of the provinces of North and South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and the cities of General Santos, Koronadal, Tacurong, Kidapawan and Cotabato, officials said the enrollment figure rose by the present count, past 6 last year's.

STUDENTS at the Jose Bautista Elementary School in Dumog, Davao City, help clean up the school grounds in line with the week-long "Bulgada Eskwela" initiated by the Department of Education.

The National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) reported that as of May 20, 2007, the ARMM alone had 569,853 elementary students and Central Mindanao, 348,743.

For the same period, the ARMM has 12,334 teachers while Central Mindanao has 14,218. Elementary classrooms in the ARMM numbered 11,756 while in Central Mindanao, there are 13,534.

"It is statistically impossible that children will herd as many as considerable inside a very limited classroom, most of them coming from grade one," said Lina Alawida, Department of Education director for Central Mindanao.

She said that because of the increase in the number of students, a teacher has to attend to 60 students or even more per class.

The English has put the ideal ratio of one teacher for every 30 students in a class.

Usop Dumar, acting ARMM education secretary, shared Alawida's predicament when he raised other problems areas, such as the lack of textbooks and teachers.

"The list here is a perennial problem in the English every opening of school year. despite reminders from the regional level," Dumar said.

Dumar said the national government must spend more money for youth educational needs of schoolchildren.

Both officials reiterated their commitment to implementing the DepEd policy on the integration of Islamic teaching in public schools.

"This is now the alternative learning system (not only for in but) for out-of-school Muslim youths who may not have the opportunity to go to college," said Monawia Sinsuding, schools superintendent for Muslim affairs, who met on Monday with state teachers here.

"They can enroll where they can learn Arabic and Islamic values education while they are also taught English," she said.

"Open Bulls Pastulan" has been launched Monday by the Central Mindanao police.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Serapio Jr., regional police director, said more policemen had been assigned to secure school premises. *Charlie Señar, Inquirer Mindanao with a report from Chona Yadang, Inquirer Research*

Journalist killer tagged high risk

ZAMBOANGA CITY—JAIL WARDEN Jaime see the convicted killer of Digadio journalist Edgar Damalerio as a high risk prisoner, putting him in a cell occupied by members of the local terror group Abu Sayyaf.

There will be no more karaoke and videoke machine operations and sauna games, which he did inside the Pagadian City Jail, for convicted journalist killer Colonel Wilde Wapile as he was transferred to this city a week ago.

Supt. Victor Boreos, warden of the Zamboanga City Reformatory Center, said Wapile would end up playing board games inside his cell because "shortcuts and chess are the only games allowed."

Boreos said Wapile had been placed under tight watch and all his visitors were being closely scrutinized.

Supt. Rufus Aguanta, chief of operations and spokesperson of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Western Mindanao, said Wapile was a "high risk and high profile inmate," which prompted them to make his transfer confidential "to ensure that he will not escape or groups might snatch him from us."

"It's all for security reasons," Aguanta said.

Well-trained

"Wapile's case is not just a typical commission of index crimes, it has characters on his case being a former military and police officer and his reported association with notorious criminal gangs," Aguanta added.

Wapile was transferred under heavy guard to the Zamboanga City Reformatory Center on May 31. He was immediately detained at Cell No. 3, sharing it with 60 other high-risk and high-profile criminals, like suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf Group, members and rapists.

The triumbi, Aguanta said, was based on an order from the Regional Trial Court Branch 19 in Cebu City and request from Supt. Elmer Gregorio, warden of the Pagadian Jail.

Wapile is not allowed to mingle with anyone outside his cell, Boreos said. He is also not included in any of the facility's programs and projects like the recently held skills training for inmates.

"We'll stay here for safekeeping, he will not be transferred to another facility (Matrimbuan)," Boreos said.

John Bijuela, Inquirer Mindanao

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Pangasinan language is alive and kicking

By Yolanda Sconio-Fuentes
Inquirer City

WITH ITS SPEAKERS DECreasing by the day, many consider the Pangasinan language to be dying. But a local historian is struggling to keep the language alive by compiling native words and publishing these in a dictionary.

Jovillanos "Bel" Javillonar, 76, has published the Fourth edition of the Pangasinan-English, English-Pangasinan language dictionary. The compilation has 20,000 entries, but future the number of words when he published the first edition in 2002.

Javillonar said he feels bad when he hears people say the Pangasinan language is dying.

"It's alive, and this dictionary is a proof that it is," he said. He also cited a study of the provincial government that 11 percent of Pangasinenses speak the language, as opposed to 47 percent who speak Ilocano and the rest, dialects like Ibaloi.

Javillanos' labor of love to preserve Pangasinan words started more than 20 years ago while working as chief of staff of former Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña in 1985.

He informed Cendaña, a Pangasinense, of his dream to publish the dictionary and Cendaña readily supported the plan.

Javillanos started researching and collecting native words, getting through available materials written in Pangasinan like the Bible, gospel books, newspapers, novels of Juan Villamil and Maria Magsaysay, and copies of Tawang, a pre-World War II paper that emphasized literary works in Pangasinan.

He searched the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and local libraries in the Philippines, archives of the National Library, the archives of the University of Santo Tomas and the Ateneo de Manila University.

"I was always ready with a pen and a notebook, jotting every new word I met," Javillanos said.

After filling up about a dozen notebooks with Pangasinan words, the painstaking work of arranging them alphabetically followed.

THE COVER of the Pangasinan-English, English-Pangasinan Language Dictionary depicts the Pangasinenses' character—hardworking, resourceful, resilient, patient.

'This language is beautiful and rich in vocabulary'

Long hand

"I did everything by long hand," he said.

The publication of the dictionary, however, was stalled as his responsibilities as the municipal administrator of Bayambang soared, and later as councilor, had to be put aside.

Finally, the dictionary's first edition came out in 2002. The book became a "hit" of sorts, especially with local officials who made it a part of their teams' "official gifts" to visitors. Local officials also bring copies whenever they go abroad as pasalubong (gifts) to Pangasinenses there.

He said the dictionary's fifth edition would be printed in the United States this November when the Bantgan Alliance National High School holds a reunion for its alumni living in the US and Canada.

"They clamor for a copy but the dictionary is heavy and the freight is expensive, so we decided to just print it there," he said.

The dictionary has 15 pages of user lessons in spoken Pangasinan, like greetings, signs and public notices, days and time, numbers and questions, and general expressions.

There are also poems in Pangasinan, including a version of National Hero Jose Rizal's "Mi Ultimo Adios."

Javillanos said his father, Jose Javillanos, the municipal president (mayor) of Bayambang from 1919 to 1925, translated the poem to Pangasinan (no date) but in 1946.

Beautiful and rich

He said poets and novelists in Pangasinan never expressively because the language is "beautiful and rich in vocabulary."

In the dictionary's introduction, he cited some examples of how rich the language is: "The English word for sunshine is captioned in the Pangasinan as sumang sumia; plant, ogapap, tamtam, gamot, pasapas, pilidil, papay, pinnas and pinnit; cloth, lupi in English and kolang in Pangasinan over a 13 times more variety: abagir, abel, antingal, anthgot, bistag-bistag, sarol, sophanap, sarra, labidu, sikeel, bidoheen, sobit, salad, and shimmering."

The dictionary's publication has opened doors to more translations. He was named president of the Jose Tamayo Foundation, after its founder, Antonio Tamayo, retired as the University of Pangasinan vice-president.

The foundation aims to preserve the Pangasinan culture and arts, among other things.

DIPLOMAT Javillanos autographs a copy of his Pangasinan-English, English-Pangasinan Language Dictionary.

Feliz Perez: No world-weary traveler

By Elizabeth Ludwigs
Correspondent

FOR A 21-YEAR-OLD STUDENT, Feliz Gabriela Soledad Perez, known as "Feli," has seen much of the world, but she still retains the eyes of an innocent.

In her first solo exhibition entitled "Unpacking" at the Café by the Ruins in Baguio City, ongoing until June 13, she presents 30 photographs of sunsets, children and animals taken by her from her travels in Angola, SE Europe and in Kyrgyzstan, Senegal, where she spent two weeks doing research as a social anthropology major of the University of the Philippines Baguio, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico and California in the United States.

Her curiosities of traveling with her family globe-trotters when she was 6 years old exploring Thailand. With mother Adelaida, sister Thelma, cousins or grandfathers Capt. Roberto Lim, formerly a pilot of Philippine Airlines, she has been through most of Southeast Asia, Europe, Singapore, where she spent two weeks doing research as a social anthropology major of the University of the Philippines Baguio, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico and California in the United States.

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FELIZ Perez with some of her photographs at Café by the Ruins.

ELIZABETH LUDWIGS

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office VI
Cagayan de Oro

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, Region VI through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites Qualified Public Storage Operators/Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the warehouse project:

Name of Project: Contract for the Supply of 2007 Trucking/Hauling Services
Location: Cagayan de Oro City Per Depot to NFA Cagayan de Oro City/Region VI Several Lokod Warehouses and Warehouses under Sub-Depot
Brief Description: Contract for the hauling of bags of NFA rice from Cagayan de Oro City Per Depot to NFA Cagayan de Oro/Region VI several lokod warehouses and 500 Several areas (as is)

CONTRACT NO.	SOURCE OF FUNDS/ PROJECT REFERENCE	ESTIMATED VOLUME OF WORK	MINIMUM CAPITAL REQUIREMENT	MINIMUM NET WORTH REQUIREMENT	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT	DELIVERY TIME OR COMPLETION PERIOD
170	TRANSFER (SECURITY RED DISPATCH) (LOCAL) (LOCAL) (LOCAL) (LOCAL) (LOCAL) (LOCAL)	80,000 bags 2,100,000 kilograms (or 42,000.0 tonnes)	2,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	6/6	4,000,000.00	3 months
Total							

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar contract within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding and have the personnel and equipment (owned, available for the prosecution of the project. The list of technical equipment requirements is included in the Eligibility Forms. Prior Eligibility clearance/licensing per each lot in the Philippines is a requirement of bids. Valid and subsisting "green list" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Bidding, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conferences, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

	ACTIVITIES	VENUE	DATE	TIME
1.	Issuance of Bid Documents	2F NFA Compound Office, Kiosk, Cagayan de Oro City	May 29 to June 5, 2007	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM working days
2.	Pre-Bidding Conference	2F NFA Compound Office, Kiosk, Cagayan de Oro City	June 5, 2007	1:30 PM
3.	Deadline for Submission and Receipt of Bids/ Opening of Bids/ Declaration of Bid Eligibility	2F NFA Compound Office, Kiosk, Cagayan de Oro City	June 20, 2007	1:30 PM
4.	Issuance of Notice of Award	2F NFA Compound Office, Kiosk, Cagayan de Oro City	June 28, 2007	1:30 PM

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable processing/sales amount for bid documents per Contract to the Cashier of the National Food Authority – Cagayan de Oro City.

The National Food Authority, Region VI reserves its responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The National Food Authority, Region VI reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the bidders.

(Sgd.) CAMILO D. MASTERO
BAC Chairman

HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Purified Drinking Water including Provision, Installation and Maintenance of Water Dispenser/Drinking Facilities for Y2007-3008

The Pag-IBIG FUND, through its Bids and Awards Committee for Goods & Services (BAC-GS), intends to apply the sum of (PP) 900,000.00/ being the approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the supply and delivery of (5) 18 (5 gallons containers purified drinking water including provision, installation and maintenance of water dispenser/drinking facilities (+10%) (+20%) Bids received in excess of the ABC shall not automatically be rejected at the opening.

The Pag-IBIG FUND now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply and Delivery of Purified Drinking Water including Provision, Installation and Maintenance of Water Dispenser/Drinking Facilities for Y2007 to December 2008. Delivery of the goods is required within P calendar days from receipt of Notice of Award. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part 5 (IRR-5) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and to Pag-IBIG Fund Board Resolution No. 1999-0-0185 dated December 9, 1999, otherwise known as Pag-IBIG Fund's Manual Section on Filipino preference procedures/rules, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Presidential Decree (P.D.) No. 1789 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who meet the eligibility criteria will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo post-qualification stage in order to finally determine the compliance of the LCB to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification proceedings.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Pag-IBIG FUND and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Procurement Division, General Services Department, 7th Floor, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City starting June 6, 2007 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the Procurement Division, General Services Department, 7th Floor, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City starting June 6, 2007 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) only. The method of payment will be in the form of cash or manager's cashier's check payable to Pag-IBIG FUND. The Bidding Documents shall be available personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Pag-IBIG FUND will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on June 13, 2007 at 2:00 in the afternoon at the Amber Room, Function Hall, Ground Floor, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted on June 20, 2007 at the Amber Function Hall, Ground Floor, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City, Metro Manila on the morning. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount equivalent to a percentage of the ABC, to be in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check and two (two) and a half percent (2 1/2%) of the ABC in the form of surety bond. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bids opening shall be held on June 20, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. this morning at the Amber Function Hall, Ground Floor, The Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The Pag-IBIG FUND reserves the rights to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call/observe: Alfredo Hercilla G. Reyes and Jose Maria M. Diaz at 811-8282, 894-0973 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at gsd@pagibigfund.gov.ph

(Sgd.) EMMA LINDA G. FARIA
Senior Vice President, Technical Support
Chair, BAC Goods and Services

By:

(Sgd.) DELIA L. BERNARDO
Vice President, Administration Group
Vice Chair, BAC Goods and Services

New subsidy plan ...

From page A1

...to minimize against private school students coming from indigent families but also retain the revenue generated by private schools across the country," he said says.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus scoffs at such duties, saying that, in fact, the plan was made by schools themselves in the form of vouchers P15,000 and they could hardly be classified as subsidy.

Increase in budget

"By the time of my tenth, I have already gotten one increase in the budget," says Lapus, noting the subsidy from P8,000 to P9,000 this year because students went to private high schools under dropping out.

"They are not subsidized. They have to conduct business. There have to conditions. They have no textbooks," says Lapus.

"I ask now, what is the counterpart of the private schools which are being set by parents of their children? Aside from the government. What are they contributing to the students?"

The ESC was implemented under a law passed in 1989 to decongest public high schools after the government's free secondary education system pushed massive numbers from primarily-poor families.

This was done after the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE) conducted a pilot project in Marikina, Leyte and Cagayan in school year 1992-93 and the result eventually became the ESC.

ESC financing came from the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (Gastpe) which, in the last school year, swelled 32 billion, including about P6B million for the ESC pilot project.

Private high schools had accumulated the till payment of some enrollees in the 1970s. By the late 1980s, when the free high school education program came into effect, the figure had dropped further to 20 percent. A general economic crunch also triggered the exodus to public schools.

Way out of tight spot

Without the measures to deal with overcrowding, the DepEd went into severe overcrowding, paving for students to accommodate Grade 6 graduates.

It was a way out of a tight spot.

Instead of building schools, putting in facilities and hiring teachers, the government adopted The ESC.

Each student got a subsidy that began with P900. By last year, the subsidy had gone up to P9,000. Reports say that putting the private sector in charge of the [illegible] has saved the government P8,000 each with the student in P1,000.

The Chinese schools expressed disappointment at the DOE guidelines, including limiting the use of the ESC tuition's promises per participating school, disqualifying schools charging more than P15,000, excluding private elementary school graduates as beneficiaries, and allowing parents to transfer their children to other schools in case of blacklisted DepEd high schools, meaning those in impoverished areas.

Why ESC appeals

Former Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus outlines in a paper why the ESC appeals:

"For the DFS, [the] DepEd elects fund the schools qualified to receive the voucher entitlements. Any school in the red zone, areas where public high schools lacked classrooms or teachers, could participate in the DFS," says Dr. Jesus.

"In the schools eventually selected, through a process that ensures transparency and equity, the principals selected 20 students belonging to the upper 50 percent of the graduating elementary class to receive the scholarships."

On the other hand, in the ESC, parents had to apply and consent to cover the gap between the subsidy and the school's tuition, says Dr. Jesus. School committees evaluate the applicants' financial standing and academic ability.

Subsidy in the "red zone" had to pass the qualification standards of the DSFS, which administers the project for Congar grant. The DSFS also maintained existing programs for DepEd schools, considered them in developing learning materials and monitored student performance.

Reinventing the wheel

"Taking money away from the ESC for a voucher system essentially duplicating what it is already doing is an exercise in reinventing the wheel," says he says.

The DepEd is determined to push ahead with the pleasures of the ESC, whose obvious appeal is lower tuition. It allows the administrators to do the teachers.

It would stress the function of a Philippine Fund, says Lapus, who is betting to the discretionary initiative backed by P2 billion in funds from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which were formed out during the fiscal-stricken presidency of Corazon in 2004.

Fait accompli

Mahiane Pablenzie, a member of the Save Assistance Council, shocked by the education secretary since he assumed office. "Unfortunately, stories from the panel in March asking him to sign the adoption of vouchers systems and the phantom of the contracting program.

"It is unfair to sign the document, pursuing on that he was being served a fait accompli, it was done without the benefit of debate in the money if which is supposed to be consulted at least once a year, he says.

The ESC was approved by law enacted by Congress, Pablenzie says. If it is changed by executive fiat, he is concerned that a new President will easily change its ground rules.

"We want the department to go back to the law," he says. For instance, who is also executive director of the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines. He says the Coordinating Council for Private Schools, the umbrella association for the ESC, is challenging the executive groups, is instituting to oppose the voucher system.

Lapus denies questions on Palanca's criticisms. He admits that the mechanism could still be fine-tuned and emphasized that the main important thing now that with the account in funding there will be more beneficiaries.

For now, the outlook doesn't look too good for private school administration.

Lim gives back forest park to public

By Alliance W. Lopez

NATURE LOVERS NOW HAVE A reason to go back to a park by the Pasig River to Marikina.

In celebration of World Environment Day yesterday, Sta. Ali Erelo Lim, the mayor-elect of Manila, vowed to reopen the Arroceros Forest Park once he assumes office.

Lim said that come July 1, everyone would be welcome to enjoy the forest park.

The forest park was closed to the public after outgoing mayor Lito Atienza had it converted to to the City Schools Division of Manila.

"We are happy that Senator Lim is back as the mayor of Manila," said Mirriam Foundation president Regina Ordoñez.

The environmental group, which was designated caretaker of the 2.2-ha forest park in a 1992 memorandum of agreement with then Mayor Atienza, protested the park's conversion and filed a preliminary injunction case at the Manila Regional Trial Court. The case is awaiting resolution.

A CHALLENGE TO CONGRESS: Catherine Untalan, Miss Earth Water 2006, and Jean Fern, Miss Philippines Earth 2007, urge lawmakers during 24th Congress session on climate change concerns during a press conference at the Batasang Pambansa where they also distributed seedlings. JOHN BERNARDO

Volunteers to plant 20M trees July to Nov.

From page A1

duction Inc. on plant 20 million trees in denuded forests and watersheds from July to November.

The project, according to Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes, aims to encourage to regain "a lost part" of the country's forest cover, now down to less than 20 million hectares from 21 million hectares in 1900.

"Through the trees, Reyes said, "it is intended to tell the conscience of all Filipinos on the pressing need not only to preserve but to restore a natural habitat, which has been irresponsibly and inadvertently damaged, almost beyond repair."

Forest cover growing

Reyes said that increasing forest cover, thanks to people-oriented forestry projects and adoption of community-based forest management, was picking up. The forest cover grew from 5.4 million hectares in 1987 to 7.4 million hectares in 2004.

But he acknowledged that there are still challenges to overcome, including in the private groups, in instituting to oppose illegal-logging syndicates.

Lapus denies questions on Palanca's criticisms. He admits that the mechanism could still be fine-tuned and emphasized that the main important thing now that with the account in funding there will be more beneficiaries.

For now, the outlook doesn't look too good for private school administration.

Green Army Foundation is a multisectoral coalition of environmental, civil-society, religious, youth and business groups, and academes.

Match Singapore

"With the massive tree-planting Edgar Chua, Green Army president, said the Philippines would soon match Singapore's greenery.

"Whatever I can see Singapore, I always marvel at how green the place is. And I'm filled with envy that such a small place can be so green. ... Singapore is very near to the equator, and yet sometimes it feels cooler than the Philippines. [That's because] I [see] as all over the place," he said.

In his speech at the main lobby of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Chua said he was envious of the Philippines.

"It's endowed with so much trees, so much natural resources, and yet, it's nowhere near a city like Singapore," said Chua, [the] Philippines cheer.

The 20M million Filipino plant a tree each, then that's "more trees than what Singapore has now," said Chua.

Green highways

The project is actually a continuation of the reforestation component of the Green Philippine Highways, a project of the DENR, Green Army and Mirant Foundation that planted 800,000 trees along 4,011 kilometers of roads last year.

With the simultaneous planting of 800,000 trees, the project set a new Guinness World Record of the "Most Trees Planted Simultaneously."

Since only 40 percent of the trees survived, the DENR planted ten of thousands more trees.

But like in the Green Philippine Highways project, the DENR and the Green Army need volunteers for the "Trees for Life" project.

Volunteer needed

Chua said volunteers could sign up for the tree planting by logging on to the Green Army's website www.greenarmyinternet.net.

"Each and everyone of us can do something in our own small way," he said. "This is an opportunity for each and everyone of us to live to the occasion, and do something in our own small way to make a difference; it small differences, multiplied by a large number, becomes a large difference."

At the launch, attended by former Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, Odette Alcantara of Mother Earth, and Brian Acuzio and John Rose of Green Army among others, the DENR and Green Army signed a memorandum of agreement to undertake the project.

A presentation of 20 seedlings to [illegible] from the Philippine Institute of Quezon City and the Sumaburg Kabayanan Elementary followed to mark the start of the environmental mission.

Artwork

The launch was done against the backdrop of an artwork by Ferraro. The artwork consists of some 10,000 pieces of origami, a term used by the people of Asuncion and Quezon provinces to describe the end part of logs that are cut and discarded during illegal logging operations.

The origami were spread throughout the Cultural Center of the Philippines' front lawn.

"This allusion to a graveyard of many unknown to a consuming crime against nature," said CCP president Nestor Jardin in an earlier interview.

"These pieces of wood represent the denudation of our forests. Many of them are already stockfiles and land erosion. Bringing tragic consequences that made headlines recently," Jardin said.

The origami were all connected by red nylon cords of different lengths and thickness "representing the broken ecology of a rare forest," he said.

"Each origami represents someone. Angad is when is left of the devastation that we all have to suffer. So with the backdrop, we hope that this artwork takes an added significance and make people see now to do something good for the environment," he said. DEBB a report from Jeanne Fernandez

Group to tap people power to push education reforms

From page A1

base to turn our advocacy into votes, among other things," says Teodoro "Teddy" Casiño, Bayan Presidential adviser on the power process who is now the INCITE-Gov's managing trustee.

"The advocacy is, you cannot just for concentrating on developing a good agenda for education. You have to have to become a political force," says Isidro, one of the 18 members of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet who resigned in July 2005 on the height of allegations that she colluded in the May 2004 elections.

Isidro organization has clinched it is necessary to empower the public in carrying the education's agenda in local governments, Congress and polling precincts.

"We have left politics to the politicians that reformists have not mobilized with it—in fact, they've stayed away from politics for fear of denying their hands. And if we are citizens who want us to be able to demand things from our government, we have to engage in politics," Isidro told the Inquirer following a discussion on the framework to a Bayan INCITE-Gov organized with the 80s sons Philippines Foundation.

The reform approach was a result of INCITE-Gov's research which is centered in terms a framework "that will reform democratic politics until the practice of good governance so that society can be made to perform as a level that is sufficient to obtain good governance outcomes," the organization says.

Dutch funding

The research, started in June 2006, through funding from The Netherlands, is aimed to "build the areas of national political leadership and institution building, security and peace, fiscal reform and social protection, under which education must is sub-focal area of study.

"What INCITE-Gov is saying is it's not enough to keep on shouting that this is the reform that you want. You have to study the entire context of the reform in light of its prerequisites and the politics of that," Isidro says.

There had been various successfully initiated...the movements for climate and solid waste management, among others—but the push stopped and fell short in accomplishing implementation, says Marco Tagunicar, INCITE-Gov trustee.

Boars and bust

"What's hard here is when we've used issues for politics, it's not really been serious or vigorous. What you get is a slogan, but what's the program?" Tadeo says.

"All our activities have been boom and bust. You think you get some movements and then it's always reversed. So if you really want sustainable reform, you really want to connect the dots of development outcome, good governance, and democratic politics," she says.

Tagunicar says instituting changes in the education system requires political leadership which, in turn, could be influenced by a critical mass pushing for reforms.

He believes the movement can fill what he calls the "missing political options" in pursuing effective reform schemes—"influencing direction of political discussions of education reform, demonstrating political clout of organized population communities through mass action or electoral strength, organized and organized lobbying for and monitoring education priorities, and dedicated policy agenda during the support or opposition from education supporters."

Jump-start

To jump-start the movement, such proclamation constituency could begin with identifying a specific cause, for instance, pushing for an increase in government subsidy for education and the assurance that public school would indeed receive the fund.

"You could galvanize many people around that. Then, when you already have a hold on the people on that issue, they will start making demands for quality. Hence, the community becomes empowered because it can now actually [illegible] education," Tagunicar says.

He enumerates three sectors that could follow the framework and start the targeted productive movement:

- Established groups engaged in pushing for education reform which "can begin thinking about how they can adopt policy advocacies.

- Overseas Filipino workers, their families and "the better of our community who are already the beneficiaries of a good education."

- The youth, including young professionals, and those in college who have "the most potential to become active during elections."

Tadeo adds, "You want to support the buildup of parties that really stand for positions. You force the parties to take a position."

Bayan, to protect the movement from being used as a campaign tool and forgotten after the winners are proclaimed, Tagunicar says the bloc will be as active in making its supported politicians accountable for their positions.

"If you know that this will be a political force, up to the future, if you do not deliver in the next three years, you're out ... You must make sure you're honest because we are in a position to punish you if you do not abide by your agreement," he says.

Great danger

Tagunicar recognizes that establishing such a constituency will take time, but the INCITE-Gov's framework will be is that.

Delay, believes enacting, may would be perfect timing. "The crisis of education and the crisis of democracy are bearing down on us," she says.

She says instituting reform in education is urgent in the country is "in a period of great danger".

"We know that if democracy is endangered, our education is further endangered because authoritarian rule doesn't like people who are critical, it doesn't like critical attitudes. They would prefer those who can be fooled," Tadeo says.

GMA in Fatima thanks Our Lady for Mike A's cure

From page A1

At the now-classical style she has developed over the years, Mrs. Arroyo attended a special Mass and thanked the Virgin Mary for the "miraculous healing" of her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, from a highly risky open heart surgery.

She was given a tour of the shrine built on the site of Mary's appearances to the child Lucia dos Santos and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto in 1917, and visited by four million pilgrims a year.

"You're the first Philippine president to make a pilgrimage to the Shrine," shrine rector Bsp. Virgilio Antonio Ziggy Noronha told Mrs. Arroyo.

Mrs. Arroyo was given gifts, including the Book of the Shrine, the official medal of the Our Lady of Fatima and a rosary.

She and her delegation were taken to the Aljubin Hall, where gifts offered by pilgrims over the years—such as wedding gowns, jewelry and jewelry—are sold to the Towers of Fatima were displayed.

Ms Arroyo flew to Portugal after a visit to the Vatican and a meeting with Pope Benedict XVI, who discussed his keen sense of political developments in the Philippines, asking her about her relationship with Congress and the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

Ms Arroyo said the reputation that part of the third secret of Fatima was the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II, who often went to the Fatima. She said the Pope put the bullet taken off his body in the Aljubin Hall.

"It was providential. There was a bullet that was found by the Governor of the ballet," she said.

In the shrine, 113 km from Lisbon, Ms Arroyo attended a special Mass celebrated by Chancellor of the Apostolic Curia presided over the Mass and prayed for the Philippines.

The exact site of the apparitions was marked by a marble pillar and a chapel with a statue of the Virgin Mary was placed.

Later, Ms Arroyo toured the village of Aljustrel, where the three children lived, and drank water from a well in Loca do Anjo, where the children received the first apparition of Virgin from the "Angel of Peace."

Ms Arroyo then had dinner with diverse administrative officials.

Salvosa Mayor Jose Manuel de Carvalho Marques came to Fatima on learning that Ms Arroyo was coming. Salvosa was the hitchplace of Ferdinand Magellan.

Ms Arroyo and Marques worked to establish relations with Cebu City.

In a talk with reporters covering her visits to Italy and Portugal, Ms Arroyo admitted she came out of her 30-minute private meeting with the Pope with a big smile.

"She's very supportive, let's put it that way," Ms Arroyo said, referring to her "faith-based government" that she added could be a model for other Catholic countries.

"He didn't open the subject about the elections, he talked about how is my relationship with Congress. I said it's good, we just had elections. In the Senate, it is area and will always be pro administration but in the House, my majority was reduced," Ms Arroyo told reporters over breakfast at the Sana Sesamea Hotel Ate Lisboa where she stayed during her two-day stop in Portugal.

She said the Pope told her: "That's good because you will be able to do more of what you want to do."

'He knows a lot'

Asked why the Pope was interested in her relationship with Congress, Ms Arroyo said: "I can't say why. He knows a lot about what's happening in the Philippines."

Ms Arroyo's office later organized chatter in the big majority of administration supporters in the House that would rule out a fresh impeachment bid against her in the remaining three years of her term.

Ms Arroyo's aide also repeated the new Senate to be undergo.

HALLOWED GROUND: A nun acts as guide to Ms Arroyo during her tour of the shine of Our Lady of Fatima in central Portugal. She is being shown the grave sites of Lucia and Jacinta, two of the children to whom Our Lady made a series of appearances in 1917.

Told that the ornamental room appears to be 6-2-2 in favor of the opposition, the President said: "The Senate has always been made up of 24 separate republics. So what is important is to try to work with all parties concerned so we can push forward the things that our country needs."

Asked if she would talk with the new senators, she said: "I have not thought about that."

In Manila, Team Unity senatorial candidate Juan Miguel Zubiri said yesterday that Ms Arroyo was "unequivocal" over the outcome of the senatorial elections and decried the failure of local governments units to deliver at least Sin 20 candidates to the Senate.

The Bukidnon congressman also said Ms Arroyo orchestrated herself during a meeting in Malacañang last Saturday before she left for Fatima.

"She felt a bit bad because she thought at the entry level, the local government units or the machinery would deliver five senators to the Magic 12," Zubiri, speaking in Filipino, told a small group of reporters.

He said that, in many cases, administration respondents and gubernatorial candidates "brought out of [their] interest and no longer campaigned for the TU candidates, his Mindanao bid.

Disappointed, Arroyo said she would just pray and "seek power spiritually" in Rome, Zubiri said.

Zubiri pointed to the personnel ill between Sultan-CMO and Rangel and said: "Before the elections, we took pride in saying that 90 percent to 80 percent of the country had no opposition bets ... So, there were no opposition bets but there were four administration bets fighting each other in the result was the same. What happened was no one campaigned for us."

Compliments

In her talk with reporters in Lisbon, Mr Arroyo said the Pope opened their meeting with compliments about the economic program under her leadership.

"I told him that yes, our economic growth rate is very good," she said.

She said she told the Pope that her administration had been able to reduce the Philippine poverty rate by 1 percent a year and was looking forward to meeting the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by 2015.

She told the Pope that her administration was "working very hard with the Church for the practical options for the poor."

"He's very happy about our policy and that it can be a model, that you can follow the precepts of the Church in public policy and still the economy is doing well," she said.

The President said the Pope inquired about the peace and order situation in Mindanao and she told him that her government's "soft and hard power" approach is dealing with the insurgency region.

Papal visit

Ms Arroyo said the discussions also touched on human rights in the context of the abolition of the death penalty in the Philippines and the peace process in Mindanao.

Asked about a possible papal visit to the Philippines, Ms Arroyo said: "We may be easier to visit the Philippines but as to when (There is no word yet)."

The President invited the Pope to visit the Philippines during their first meeting with him at the Vatican in June last year.

"He loves the Philippines because we are the most devout [Catholic country] and are fellow Christians of the Church. And of the Philippines and Italy are very religious," she said.

Ms Arroyo said that earlier at St. Peter's Basilica on Monday after the canonization mass for four new saints the Pope told her he knew about the many Filipinos working in Italy.

Opportunity for prayer

"I told him Italy is a favored destination for Filipinos because of the Catholic faith. They feel at home in Italy," she said.

Ms Arroyo described her trip to the Vatican and Fatima as "an opportunity for prayer, thanksgiving and petition and to renew the spiritual strength, moral courage and faith based governance."

"It's a big privilege for me that he received me today in the way he was that he's been dope," she said.

Ms Arroyo said she was invited by the Assumptean Alumni Association to lead the delegation that attended the canonization of Maria Eugenia, founder of the Religious of the Assumption.

"Then I was invited by the Pope to come here and then the president of Portugal is assuming presidency of the European Union, so it was really a confluence of events which gave me this opportunity," she said.

She also said: "I thanked the Blessed Virgin for the miraculous healing of my husband because I prayed to her during that time," she said.

Filipino bishops' reaction

Reacting to the President's promise to the Pope to improve democracy and human rights, Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, who also is vice president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said: "We hope something concrete will come out of it because the country is being watched by the international community and human rights groups especially on the current killings."

Not in command of AFP

Lingayen Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, an outspoken critic of the Arroyo administration, said he believed that the President's promise was "not sensible."

Lingayen Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he believed Ms Arroyo's promise was "not sensible."

"As Commander in Chief, she already has her command. Meaning, the AFP and other entities are acting on their own with or without her say," Cruz added.

With reports from Jerome Aning and Melba Aget, Inquirer.net

Pichay bows out; vows to bounce ...

From page B1

knows the experience has restricted him.

And it might also have prepared him for a shot at a higher office. Pichay said yesterday, eying the case of the late President Ferdinand Marcos, who started his bid for governor of Caliraya but bounced back to win the ES presidency.

"This is not the last you will hear from me," the Surigao del Sur congressman vowed in a phone interview.

Why magnify the election?

"I believe I have done well in a political campaign in the national sense," he said, finally conceding defeat after two of his Team Unity (TU) colleagues—Michael Defensor and Ralph Recto—had thrown in the towel.

"That was the end for me. I still have 2010 to look forward to."

A Commission on Elections tally showed that Pichay was not among the candidates who left to help Pedrea, currently in 14th place in the race for 12 Senate seats.

Unlike Defensor and Recto, Pichay said he found no need to announce his surrender with finality.

"Why do you have to resign by the election?" he asked.

Enriching experience

Pichay declined at the start of the 90-day campaign period that he intended to run and his single-minded pursuit of a Senate seat was evident in his political ads on prime-time television and radio. Only after he had lost did he tell his staff and self-funded service.

"The experience was very enriching. For a new face in national politics to garner 10 million votes, I consider that something. I have big names along the way," said Pichay.

He was disappointed he lost but he claimed he never "entertained any thought that ... I would be a sure winner."

Odds against him

Pichay knew that the odds were stacked up against him when he decided to run. He had only a 45-percent name recognition rating and a 0.7-percent approval rating. The consensus wisdom was only those with a minimum 70-percent recognition rating and a double-digit approval rating had a chance.

"Although it was a long shot, longer to bear the odds and I came very close," said Pichay.

He was also disappointed that the TU did not win at least six seats in the Senate as projected in the group's worst case scenario, but he refused to make excuses.

No regrets

Pichay said he did not regret spending so much for a losing cause. He said he decided to run when he saw that the election's biggest spender, "My campaign ads were magnified only because I bought its television and radio. But I estimate that my campaign expenditures will not exceed 50 percent of my pocket," he said.

Pichay plans to go back to his private business—his family owns ABS-CBN and the Bonanza subdivision—and make them grow over the next three years.

"I have three options in 2010—I can run with my private life or regain my old seat in Congress or take another shot at a higher post.

"I believe I have made a good political investment. Four given political leaders have their setbacks before they become a success. The Abraham Lincoln and Richard Nixon."

15 Liberals back Garcia bid ...

From page A1

had already rallied to Garcia about to possible support.

Zamora joining fray

With 127 votes needed to clinch the speakership, Garcia and the LP would need only 15 House members from both the administration and its colleagues in the opposition to vote for the 62-year-old, three-term Cebu governor.

"This is their chance to reform the institution. We had been under Speaker De Venecia before. Did anything good happen?" Tañada said.

De Venecia has been Speaker since 2001. Hurting also held the post from 1992 to 1998, he is seeking a record fifth term.

Two other administration lawmakers—Mary Ann Susano of Quezon City and Celestino Martinez III of Bataan—have also chosen their fate into the derby.

The opposition says it is grooming San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora as its contender for the post.

JDV has numbers!

Garcia is a member of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), one of the top two parties in the House majority coalition.

Ms Arroyo has publicly stayed away from the fray but a top Malacañang official claimed recently that the President's heart was for De Venecia.

Yesterday, the De Venecia camp claimed the Speaker's bid was backed by at least 116 lawmakers.

"It will still be quite a while before the opening of Congress On July1 ... It's hard to say that [De Venecia] already has secured the majority," Tañada said.

He said: "We're looking after the interest of the LP. We believe that the LP will have a greater involvement in the next Congress with Garcia than with the Speaker. We're thinking about the LP in the next Congress and its future."

Administration play

Members of the opposition in the House have raised fears that Garcia's bid might be a ploy by the Arroyo administration to control the House minority and prevent a third impeachment against Ms Arroyo from getting filed.

Garcia was the chairman of Cebu province during the 2004 elections and was widely credited for delivering the million votes from his province that helped Ms Arroyo in her election bid with her late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

By tradition, the latter in the speakership fight gets to be minority floor leader.

Garcia, whose relationship with Palace is precarious, he wasn't feared by anyone to run. It's his sincere intention to reform the House and regain its credibility as an institution that made him do it," Tañada said, referring to speculation that Garcia's presidential bid was related or to ensure that the next minority leader would be an administration darling.

JDV in for 'surprises'

Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, the minority floor leader, said he had the numbers, saying: "We will give him surprises every week."

"We're getting increasing adherents every day," Villafuerte said. "Generally, it's good to have De Venecia gunning."

Villafuerte said he was confident that in the end, "all sane De Venecia elements will join us."

Breathing aside the claims of Garcia's backers, De Venecia's camp issued a statement quoting Pembagsic Rep. Librado Zaleta, one of its senior leaders, as saying: "The vast majority of members are with us."

The statement said 29 lawmakers from the breakaway Asienza group in the LP had signed a unanimous supporting De Venecia.

The statement quoted Deputy Speaker for Visayas as saying: "In all aspects of counting, I am convinced that Speaker De Venecia will definitely win."

Last night, De Venecia and Kampi chair Head de Perez were to host a dinner for suspects-opponents in the 14th Congress. Villafuerte said the dinner would ostensibly be an occasion to court support for De Venecia's speakership bid.

No quorum

Garcia yesterday criticized De Venecia for the House's failure to reach a quorum on Monday. Without only 186 lawmakers present, the session adjourned in only 20 minutes.

"The failure of the House to achieve a quorum on the first day of the resumption of the regular session following the election is a sad reflection on its present leadership," Garcia said in a statement.

"There are still many legislative tasks that should be tackled before the end of Congress' sixty-day regular session. We have, unfortunately, a continuing crisis of leadership in the House that must be ended."

Opposition challenge

San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito announced in a press conference the opposition's intention to field Zamora in the fight for House speakership.

Ejercito said Zamora was a logical choice, being a senior member of the Nacionalista Mga Pilipino (NMP) and the Genuine Opposition (GO).

"We are hoping we can get the numbers since it is a numbers game but we promise that we will give a good fight," Ejercito said.

Should Zamora land in his speakership bid, he stands to assume the minority leader post to be vacated by Senator-elect Francis "Chiz" Escudero.

Cagayan de Oro Rep.-elect Rufus Rodriguez would be his deputy.

Zamora was also quoted that, if he wins to be elected Speaker, he would ensure that all issues to be tackled in the 14th Congress would be discussed thoroughly.

But Garcia said he did not foresee another impeachment case against Ms Arroyo since the House has numbers to defeat any move filing President as an opposite in 2008.

With reports from Kristine L. Alave and Shannon Magdallaan, Inquirer Visayas

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NEWS

SO NEAR, YET SO FAR

Padaca proclamation faces another roadblock

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS yesterday cleared a major roadblock to the formal proclamation of reelectionist Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo Padaca as Isabela governor but has yet to resolve one last petition by rival Benjamin Dy questioning election returns from three more towns.

PADACA

In a four-page resolution, the Comelec's first and last case closed Dy's petition to stop the canvassing of allegedly forged election returns from five Isabela towns and to suspend the proclamation of winning candidates in the gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial races.

The questioned returns were from the municipalities of Tumauini, Ilo. Tomas, Aurin, Delfin Albano and Cordon.

The election body directed the provincial board of canvassers (PBOC) to proceed with the tabulation of vote tallies "of all the municipalities of said province and to proclaim the candidates who garnere the most number of votes."

The Second Division also rejected Dy's supplemental pleading, which consisted of additional pieces of evidence and arguments to support his main appeal.

"However, in special proceedings, as in a pre-proclamation case, supplemental pleadings are prohibited and not allowed. RE, albeit a more complete detailing, cannot serve to substitute for the main appeal and cannot correct any of the deficiencies present therein," said the resolution.

This could have cleared the way for the proclamation of Padaca, who was leading by 5,223 votes based on the PBOC tally excluding those from Ilagan, Echague and Tumauini.

But an unresolved petition questioning election returns from Ilagan, Jones and Cabagan might prevent the proclamation.

Presiding Commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr., who ordered her vote not counted in the three petitions, cited the urgency to resolve the case even if the PBOC—being independent from the National Board of Canvassers—has the discretion to proceed or not with the proclamation.

"The petition has to be resolved because it might be resolved in the losing candidate (in dropping the proclamation of the winning candidate)," said Tuason, who penned the resolution dated June 4.

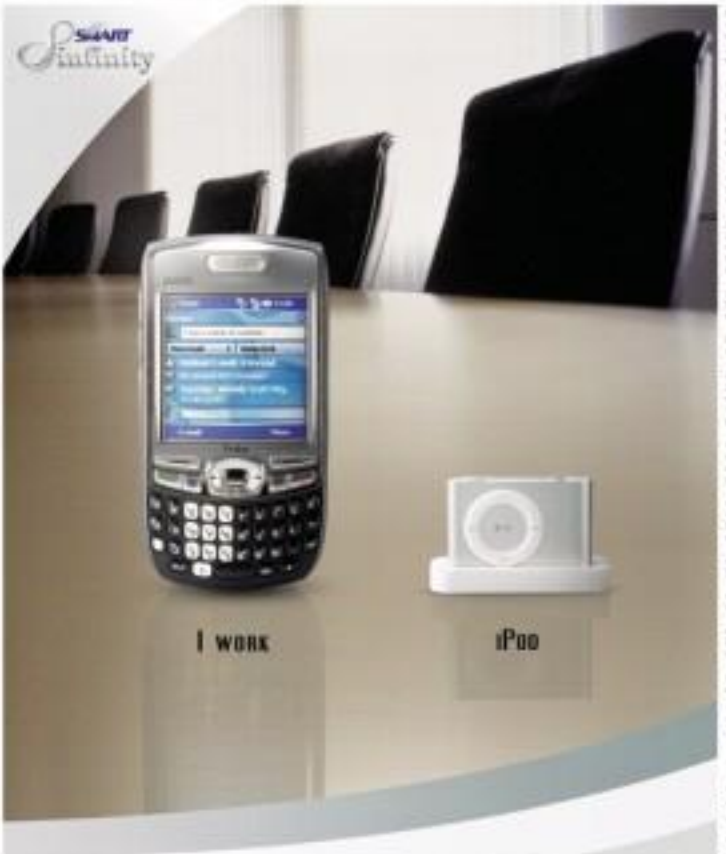
Meanwhile, Padaca's lawyer, Jalilo de Leon was surprised to learn that the resolution involved other towns aside from Ilagan, Tumauini, Echague, where the tabulation of certificates of canvass was deferred due to Dy's petition.

Apparently, their camp was not notified that another petition was filed before the Comelec, he later said.

But she said that the Comelec resolution dismissing Dy's appeals spelled victory although unsettling for Padaca.

Should the PBOC proceed with the canvassing of CoCs from Ilagan, Tumauini and Echague, Padaca would stretch her lead over Dy by more than 12,000 votes more, De Leon said.

The deferred CoCs contained of 182 election returns, in which Padaca obtained 10,292 votes compared to Dy's 6,298, she said.



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Gov't rejects OIC request for return of MNLF camp

THE GOVERNMENT HAS REJECTED AN OR-ganization of Islamic Conference (OIC) request to fund back two captured training camps to Muslim rebels, an official said yesterday.

Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said the request was made by Egyptian diplomat Ismail Kamen El-Maury during the 33rd OIC foreign ministers' conference in Islamabad recently.

The camps, occupied by forces of Ghulam Misra, a commander of the Moslem Liberty Rational Liberation Front (MNLF) on Jolo island, were captured by military forces in April after Misra's forces shelled a Marine base, killing three people.

The fighting started a year after between the government and the MNLF as part of a peace accord signed in 1996, ending a decades-old separatist campaign to return for limited Muslim self-rule.

Seguis told reporters that the Egyptian diplomat's suggestion was dismissed, adding that April's military operation did not breach the peace accord since only Misra and his supporters had taken up arms against the government.

"This is a law enforcement matter," Seguis said.

Misra is a fugitive from justice. He attacked a military camp. Right now, the military is in the process of dismantling the [captured] camps," Seguis added.

The 57-nation OIC did recognize the MNLF as the sole representative of the Philippine Muslim minority.

AFP

Aplus METRO
Editor Evan C. Querol

BACK TO SCHOOL
(From left) A girl is in tears as she looks for her mother on her first day of school at the Batasan Elementary School in Quezon City. A group of students join their teacher in acting out the sounds of a song while two others settle down for a nap during break time at Commonwealth Elementary School, also in Quezon City. PHOTOS BY ALEXANDER ALBERTO

2 YEARS AFTER RODLAN KIDNAP CASE

Pa recounts 5-year-old son's trauma

By Krinkorn L. Alave

WHEN HIS SON, THEN ONLY THREE YEARS OLD, was kidnapped in 2005 by a group allegedly headed by former actor and congressman Dennis Roldan, the abduction not only took away their joy, they also deprived the child of a chance at a normal life, the victim's father, Roger Ya, said.

Ya, who testified in court for the first time yesterday, said the incident has scarred his son to the point where he has become withdrawn and unfriendly.

"At an elementary school the boy, Ya said his son is now doing fine although he is still "suspicious" and wary about meeting people and strangers. "He's the opposite of what he used to be," the father narrated.

He expressed fear that his son, who is his and his wife's only child, would remain traumatized by the incident for years.

According to Ya, who described the boy as a happy child before the kidnapping, the son could no longer leave their house to play with other children like before. He also cannot negatively to silhouette seen on television. "He hates bad people," Ya added.

The family has also avoided going to public places like malls and parks, activities his son used to enjoy.

Now, whenever his son moves around, he is accompanied by bodyguards, Ya said.

"We discovered [our son] felt like before. He used to play in parks and he would tell me about the people he met there. Now, that's not allowed. He doesn't trust people anymore," he added.

Ya disclosed to one of his son, now five years old, is enrolled in school for security reasons. Most of the time, the boy stays in their house in Pasig City where a team of bodyguards.

"I try to make it as normal as possible, but there are limitations," the father said.

Ya added that his son is still undergoing therapy to help him deal with the trauma caused by the incident. The boy is afraid of being alone and refuses to sleep by himself, he said.

"If he wakes up alone, he will start to cry," he said.

Until now, the boy has not forgotten how he was abducted and he was concerned that it would remain with him throughout his life.

"This morning, he didn't want me to go to school. But I had to explain to him that there is a hearing," he explained.

Ya said his boy has not questioned the presence of bodyguards or the fact that he could not play with other children anymore. "He understands that this is for his own security, so that the bad men could not get him," he said.

He added that the family's long term plan was to leave the country so that their son would have a normal life. But Ya said they would finish the trial before even thinking of migrating to a foreign country.

In the hearing yesterday, Ya narrated to the court the events surrounding his son's kidnapping.

Ya added that he immediately contacted Socrates Ang-Soo, president of an anti-crime group that helps Chinese-Filipino families deal with kidnappings, as the son the only person he and his wife money could trust at that time.

"Maybe we said you are victimizing suspects," he told the court. He added that he and his wife spent as much as half a million pesos during the ordeal as they had to climb into bench for two months out of fear for their safety.

The kidnapper then contacted them through his wife's cell phone, demanding P150 million in exchange for his son. Ya said they had difficulty raising the amount as they did not have that kind of money.

Ya recalled before Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 159 Judge Rodolfo Bonifacio, who is the previous judge, Agnes Crespo, ordered he hold Dennis the case after the prosecution issue protocol for her decision to grant bail to Roldan, but set to his co-accused.

Roldan, Mitchell Gamboa and his wife and co-actor Queenie Lee, represented by wife, were present during the hearing. Wife co-accused, Rolando Gervacio, Noel and Rowena Ann Andres, Adrian Domingo, and Octavio Gatoy, were also there.

Ya said he hopes that the new judge would be impartial. "I'm glad that the hearing has resumed. But I'm also sad that I have to recall the unfortunate incidents. I hope that the judge would be fair and justice would be served accordingly," he added.

P100,000 reward for capture of armed robbers

By Julie M. Aurelio

PARAÑAQUE CITY MAYOR FLORENCIO Bernabe Jr. has offered P100,000 for the capture of members of an armed group involved in only the second case of the Metro de Oro branch of SM Bank last Monday afternoon.

Two of the bank's security guards were killed in the incident while four other guards and a 22-year-old bystander were wounded.

"The mayor is personally interested in getting after Bobby Robbery, a Parañaque resident who has a standing arrest warrant against him," Supt. Ronald Estilles, the city chief of police, said.

Robbery, who lives on Kalamansi St., Purok 2 in Barangay BF, based on police records, is reportedly wanted for robbery and homicide.

In telephone interviews yesterday, Estilles told the Inquirer that they have confirmed the identities of three other suspects believed to be members of the robbery attempt.

He identified them as Roy Gilbert Cabanes, said to be the leader of the group; Genevieve Calimlim and Raymond Martin.

The four are allegedly members of the Antipang Group, a notorious robbery and holdup gang based in Cavite.

Gilbert said Cabanes, Calimlim and Martin were arrested in February 2005 for robbing a shop inside SM City Pampanga. Seized from them were several high-powered firearms, including M-16 rifles.

"We were able to identify them through the closed-circuit television, and with the help of footage from a close circuit TV in the mall," the police official added. But the three disappeared after posting bail.

Estilles said he has formed a 15-man task force to go after the suspects and other members of the Antipang Group. The team is headed by his deputy, Supt. Teofilo Andrada.

On Monday, at around 12:30 p.m., a group of 10 to 15 men fired upon several security guards of Banco de Oro who were guarding the money van parked outside the mall.

The suspects, however, fled after other security guards fired back. Two guards — John Ray Antonio and Feliciano Castillo — were killed while four others were treated for gunshot wounds.

Twelve-year-old Hilary Magnaye, who was passing by the area when a stray bullet hit him in the leg, was also hospitalized.

It's back to old campuses for Manila students

By Alberr W. Lopez

STUDENTS OF JOSE ABAD SANTOS High School and Ralph Bellmas High School in Manila are back in their old classes on their old campuses, at least for now.

Pedro Arao, administrative officer of the Division of City Schools in Manila, said Mayor Alfredo Lim has given the go-signal for students of the two schools to remain in their old buildings on Le Chambre Street.

Where Lim ordered them to stay. He even offered to help transfer the desks and other equipment back to the old site," he said.

Classes in the two schools were suspended yesterday, the first day of school for public elementary and high school students, after there was confusion among students who either went to the old sites or to the new campus.

About 80 percent of the two schools' facilities and equipment have already been moved to the new campus on Romualdez and Dalisdis Streets, also in Binondo, to pave the way for the construction of a commercial establishment at the old site.

Arao, however, said the situation has yet to be resolved as Lim was set to discuss the issue with Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

The majority of the schools' teachers, students and their parents have opposed the transfer, saying they would have to spend more money on transport fare. The site of the new school campus is about a kilometer away from the old one.

Last year, Lim said Jose Abad Santos and Ralph Bellmas are among a Manila court to stop the city government's plan to convert the schools' old sites into a housing and commercial zone.

Their petition, however, was denied by the court although Lim said Manila still had a number of unresolved issues.

Asked why the issues have not been resolved before classes opened the other day, Arao said the transfer was ordered only by the May 14 elections.

He pointed out, however, that the new and more spacious campus would better accommodate the two schools' around 11,000 students.

Muslim group bucks demolition move

By Jobb M. Mendiz

MUSLIM LEADERS LIVING IN THE relocation area on Bulan Boulevard, Bago City, yesterday vowed to oppose a reported plan of a government agency to demolish houses and structures on the site.

"These people will die for this mosque. They will also lose and demand their rights," spokesperson Firdausi Abbas said in a press conference.

Residents, who have formed a group called the Samahan ng Magkakatanog Muslim sa Bulan Boulevard (Association of United Muslims in Bulan Boulevard), hit the plan of the Philippine Reclamation Authority to tear down their houses and the Grand Mosque in the reclamation area near the border of Pasay and Parañaque cities.

The group claimed that in 1999, then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo promised to give them the deeds of land where they could build their houses. Abbas said that at that time, the Philippine Estates Authority agreed not to touch the reclamation area where the Muslims were residing.

"Now, the PRA wants to demolish their houses. Reclamation means reclaim' an area by putting land over the sea. There is nothing to be reclaimed here, this is already land," Abbas, who also serves as the group's legal counsel, pointed out.

Open to transfer

He added, however, that they were open to moving out of the reclamation area if the government provides a suitable relocation site for the more than 500 families in the area.

"They are willing to be transferred, but the PRA must not touch the mosque," Abbas stressed.

He added that the PRA, with the assistance of the Pasay City police and Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino of the Armed Forces' National Capital Region Command, attempted to clear the area and tear down the mosque last week.

"They don't have a court order authorizing the demolition of the mosque. The PRA does not have the authority to do so," Abbas claimed.

He warned that if pushed to the limit, residents would do fighting to protect what they considered as their place of worship.

He also reiterated Bolorfino's presence in the area, claiming that the pending demolition is a police matter and not the concern of the military.

"I hope they don't resort to violence to settle the issue. There is nothing to be accomplished here, this is already land," Abbas, who also serves as the group's legal counsel, pointed out.

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Makati court junks Northrail motion; dispute far from over

By DJ Yap

THE LEGAL BATTLE OVER THE controversial North Luzon Railways Corp. seemed to be from over.

A Makati City court has junked the motion to dismiss filed by the defendants, including the Philippine government, in the civil case involving the contested Northrail contract.

Judge Oscar Garcia-Amin of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 145 dismissed the motion filed by Northrail seeking to dismiss the complaint filed by a number of affected Bataan residents, and a group of lawyers led by Harry Roque.

The center of the dispute is a contract between the government-owned Northrail and the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. for the construction of railways from Caloocan City to Malolos, Bulacan.

"The ruling shows that the only pending motions in this case [is] to the court's [it's a very good decision," Roque told the Inquirer by phone.

The civil case stems from the alleged legal and constitutional defects in the contract, which the lawyers said were enough to invalidate the contract.

Such defects include the complainants' allegation that the contract did not comply with Philippine laws requiring public bidding for all government projects.

On March 17, 2006, Makati's court granted the complainants' prayer to hold preliminary summary hearings in the case but the defendants, including the Philippine government, moved to dismiss the case.

The defendants had argued that the complainants had no legal capacity to sue. And the court had no jurisdiction to hear the case, that the complaints stated no cause of action, and that the court had no jurisdiction over COMELEC, an agency of Gloria.

COMELEC also filed a separate motion for reconsideration seeking the reversal of Makati court decision to hold summary hearings.

But in its omnibus motion dated May 15, the court denied both motions.

It said the plaintiffs could use Bataan Rep. Jun Jun Quimbo who was quoted in an government agency as involving the expenditure of public funds.

The court said the case involved matters of "extreme urgency" since it involved public spending and the foundations of the settled houses.

METROBRIEFS

Day robbery

Two men broke into a house in Manila and robbed it of some P500,000 worth of cash and valuables at 11:15 a.m. yesterday. It was a robbery that happened in broad daylight. The suspects entered the house inside Cooper's Inn Hotel on Espeleta Street. Senior Inspector Eugenio Ortuad, Sampaloc police investigator, said the victims, Ben and Rosemarie, were in the bedroom. They then noticed that the house had been ransacked and that cash and valuables worth P500,000 were missing. Ortuad said the victims lost jewelry left by their parents.

Nancy Carvajal

Grisly discoveries

Body parts that had been chopped off were found in separate garbage bins in Valenzuela City yesterday, the police said. City police chief, Supt. Billy Diño Jr., said the grisly discoveries were made between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. at the city's 498 barangays. Residents found the first one while collecting cans of beer. Investigators believe the victim was killed elsewhere before being dumped in the area. The second one was found in a garbage bin in front of Valenzuela's new city hall. Diño said the victim's head was found inside the Karuhatan Public Cemetery, with the wounds, "Bong Bolano" and "Bruno Dimalo," tattooed on it. Police said the garbage bags also contained scars of rubber mat, rubber slippers, and a pair of denim short pants.

Nancy Carvajal

Fire hits 3 houses

A FIRE struck three houses in Bonoan, Tabaquines, Pateros yesterday at 8:30 a.m., destroying at least P150,000 worth of property. Police investigators said the fire could be traced to the house of Ben Ilagan Jr. at 1012 Bonoan, Lanao and that the suspected cause of the fire which began at around 2:30 p.m. at the house of Pete Valdevilla at Tabaco St.

Thousands mark anniversary of 1989 Tiananmen massacre in HK

HONG KONG—TENS OF THOUSANDS gathered on Monday for Hong Kong's annual candlelight vigil to mark the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, the only such commemoration on Chinese soil.

"We will seek justice for you. A democratic China must come true," Anson Chan, one of the organizers, said in a speech to the crowd who raised their candles in a dark and packed Victoria Park to remember those who died.

The Chinese government sent troops into Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989 to quell six weeks of peaceful democracy protests, leading to the deaths of many students and civilians.

The mood vigil in Hong Kong has taken on special resonance this year after a host of pro-Beijing politicians took exception to calling the Tiananmen crackdown, which saw hundreds if not thousands killed, a massacre.

The remarks by Ma Lik, chair of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB), immediately drew fire from the families of victims, as well as activists and politicians here.

Chairs of "Voices with Ma Lik" were found scrunchily among the crowd, which organizers estimated at 150,000, more than last year's 44,000. Police estimated they estimated the crowd at 27,000.

Dozens of flowers and wreaths were laid, and songs were sung to commemorate those who died. AFP

NEW SPECIES

A pinkish-flecked red frog, of the genus Atelopus, is one of 24 new species found in the South American highlands of Suriname on June 4. Nine other new frog species, six species of fish, 12 dung beetles and a one-an species were also discovered. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Nigeria sues Pfizer over 'killer drugs'

ABUJA—Nigeria filed a lawsuit on Monday for $2 billion damages from Pfizer over a drug test it carried about 200 children—some either killed or deformed—used without consent. The federal government said it has "taken sufficient interest in the matter" to file a lawsuit after investigations revealed that Pfizer doctors failed to obtain parental consent, while 11 died. It similar suit was filed last month by Kano, Nigeria's largest state, which is seeking $2.75 billion from the pharmaceutical company. The Kano state suit alleges that Pfizer administered its 5000 an-controlled drug called Trovan (Trovafloxacin) without authorization to almost 200 children infected with meningitis in the state. The tests carried out at least three times. AFP

US Democratic senator charged with bribery

WASHINGTON—US Democratic Rep. William Jefferson, accused of taking $90,000 of bribes from the city in Senator, was charged on Monday with soliciting bribes and using public influence. The 59-count indictment charges the Louisiana lawmaker with racketeering, soliciting bribes for himself and his family, fraud, money laundering, obstruction of justice, conspiracy and violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Jefferson, 61, faces a maximum of 536 years in prison if convicted. He faces such Jefferson was arrested and posted $5,000 bail. Reuters

US charges 10 in Laos armed coup plot

SAN FRANCISCO—A prosecutor has charged 10 people in connection with seeking to topple the Laos government in what they described as a dramatic drunk and dagger plot financed by an underworld figure posing as an arms dealer. Most government among those charged is Hang Dao, 57, a resident of southern California and ethnic Hmong. A general in the Royal Lao Army before the Communists came to power in 1975, he left a US Central Intelligence Agency-trained mercenary army during the war in Indochina. Reuters

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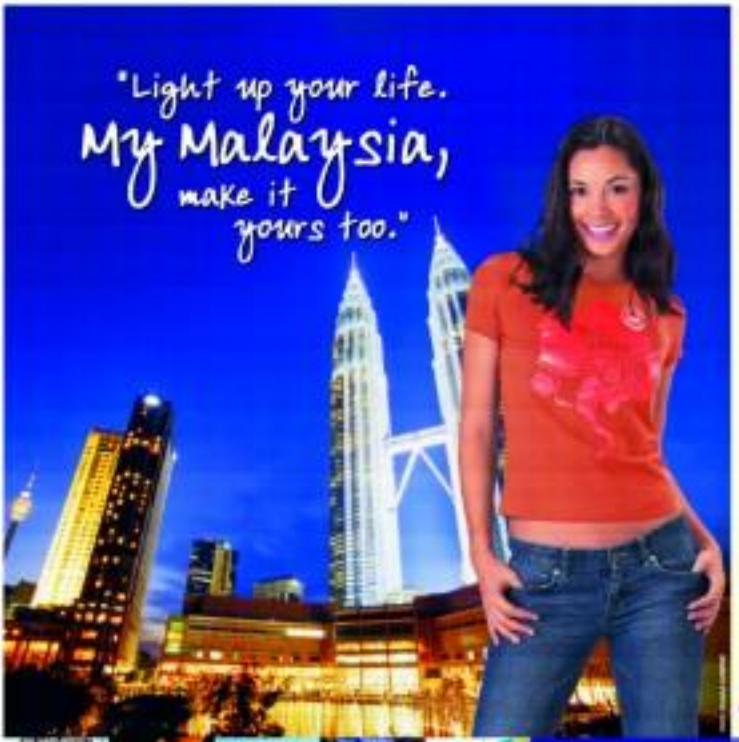

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Julie Lawrence B. Guevo

Czechs nix US missile system plan

PRAGUE—RUSSIA IS NOT ALONE IN DISLIKING the idea of basing a US missile defense system in the Czech Republic and other countries on its doorstep.

Most Czechs aren't happy about the proposal, critics likening polls in this former Soviet satellite, now a democratic Nato ally three more than 40 percent of the public is opposition.

US President George W. Bush arrived on Thursday evening in Prague for a day of meetings with Czech leaders.

The White House has billed a speech Bush will deliver on Friday from the local headquarters of Radio Free Europe on democracy as the highlight of his visit here. The Czech counterparts have complaints with Washington to discuss, such as a two-tiered visa system for European nations that requires Czech citizens to obtain visas to travel to the US.

However, the international debate over the missile defense system likely will devour any everything else during Bush's stay in Prague. The US plans calls for an anti-missile radar base to be built at the forty million acres southwest of the capital.

For three years, Czech leaders have brushed off Russia's objections, remaining receptive to the project. Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek called it "a necessary step which will significantly increase our security and also the security of our European allies and neighbors."

Most Czech citizens, though, worry about Russian threats to take military steps in response, and they fear that the installation would make the tiny country a natural target.

In Prague last weekend, more than 15,000 people protested the plan. Demonstrators planned to show their displeasure again on Tuesday outside medieval Prague Castle, where Bush was to meet with Topolanek and President Vaclav Klaus.

Over the weekend, Russian President Vladimir Putin stepped up already incendiary remarks about the US and its intentions with the shield, warning that Moscow could take "retaliatory steps" including aiming nuclear weapons at US military bases in Europe. AP

Hundreds of millions to suffer from melting of Earth's ice, UN warns

TROMSOE, NORWAY—THE melting of the Earth's ice has accelerated in recent decades, an alarming phenomenon that could affect hundreds of millions of people across the world, the United Nations warned in a report on Monday.

"The futures of hundreds of millions of people across the world will be affected by declines in snow, water and ice, glaciers, permafrost and lake ice," the Global Outlook for Ice and Snow report, published on the eve of World Environment Day, said.

"Impacts are likely to include significant changes in the availability of water supplies for drinking and agriculture, rising sea levels affecting low lying oceans and islands and an increase or hazards such as outburst floods of ice-melt lakes," said Pavel Kabat, lead author.

The Arctic ice sheet has shrunk by six to seven percent in winter and by 15 to 12 percent in summer over the past 30 years, the report said.

The snow-covered regions of the northern hemisphere have reduced by between 7 and 14 percent during March and April during the same period, according to data compiled principally by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

The melting of the ice and snow is not only a consequence of global warming, it is also its accelerating factor, researchers presenting the report to the Norwegian Arctic town of Tromsoe said.

"Snow and ice reflect 75 to 80 percent of the sun's energy, whereas water absorbs it. If more and ice continue to melt, this will amplify global warming," report author Pavel Prestrud told journalists. AFP

THE PICTURE taken in July 2004 shows detaching icebergs in Iceland's Vatnajokull glacier as they move towards the sea. The Global Outlook for Ice and Snow report was launched yesterday by the United Nations Environment Programme to mark World Environment Day. AFP

HILTON

Paris Hilton begins three-week jail term a day early

LOS ANGELES—FROM THE camera flashes on the red carpet of a Hollywood parade show to the walls of a jail cell—what a difference a day makes when you're Paris Hilton.

The 26-year-old heiress, a symbol of privilege and American celebrity culture, was booked into a Los Angeles County jail early on Monday, a day ahead of her court-ordered deadline, to begin serving a three-week sentence for violating probation in an alcohol-related reckless-driving case.

She surrendered to authorities in downtown Los Angeles hours after making a surprise appearance at the MTV Movie Awards (See related story in Entertainment Section), and was transferred to the Century Regional Detention Facility in nearby Lynwood, the county sheriff's department said.

Dane Brow, the star Bergerac, photographed and issued an ID wristband, orange-colored jail clothing and toiletries, and sheriff's department Sgt. Steve Hecht in a statement.

Hecht said the booking for Hilton, whose gross grandfather Conrad Hilton started the global Hilton hotel empire, was complete by about 1 a.m. on Monday.

Her booking photo showed her dressed in a white T-shirt, wearing eye makeup and lip gloss with a slight smile, her blond hair swept to one side over her right shoulder.

Sheriff's department spokesperson Steve Whitmore described her as "cooperative," "naïve" and "focused" during booking.

"This is an important point in my life, and I need to take responsibility for my actions," Hilton said in a statement issued by her lawyer. "Although I am scared, I am ready to begin my jail sentence." Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
- Lady Archers best Letran; Adamson up/A20

SPORTS
Editor Rodolfo S. Mañosbrenos Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Dehesa

- Roaring Rafa on a roll/A20

RP volley team's top spiker shot dead by robbers

By Miles Anthony Reyes

VIOLENCE HAS SHOOTED OUT THE LIFE of the national volleyball men's top spiker.

Sta Ines Rosito Bonlaghonan, reportedly the most prolific scorer in the national team, was among three men shot and killed by the suspected robbers in Dasmariñas, Cavite, early Wednesday morning.

The victims were reportedly celebrating their championship in a volleyball tournament in the house of one of them when the suspects swooped in and shot them.

Bonlaghonan sustained a gun shot wound in the head and died, while Seng, treated, along with four of his friends, at the University Medical Center in Dasmariñas.

Two more of Bonlaghonan's friends—Christopher Quino, 22, and Joe Robert, 22—also died from gunshot wounds, said Senior Supt. Bibit Rosales, Cavite police director.

"He is a big loss to the national team," said Gen. Mo. Blaza, director of national coaches of the Philippine Volleyball Federation. "He's tall and talented, the best player on local indie teams."

PNP secretary general Oca Constantino said they would seek the help of the Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Olympic Committee in extending assistance to Bonlaghonan's family.

PNP head Avo Mendoza denounced the killings and urged the authorities to put the suspects immediately behind bars.

Bonlaghonan, 22, was a graduating Criminology student at the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas.

Before Bonlaghonan died, he was part of the newly formed national team made up of young and tall players that is set to see action in tournaments in South Korea in July and in Indonesia in September. The team will play in the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in December.

Bonlaghonan was the biggest star of the La Salle Dasmariñas squad which he steered to four straight championships in the Shaw Southern Luzon games.

HINDER ATTACK Ronnie Matuzalem in a mix against the defense of two Harbour Centre defenders Lorenzo Ely

Moneymen, Super Sealers stay in hunt

By Jasmine N. Payo

MUCH FOCUS HAD BEEN GIVEN on the return of injured Fil-Am Ryan Reyes. After playing a key role in a 1-2 punch, Gilbert Malabanan showed he deserves a second look.

GABRIEL CHUCHANI
Official Cyber Sports Doctor
11:8 —Nuñez Bakelumbo vs Cardenal Avalon
12:30—Ateneo Lady vs Harbour Centre

The duo drilled in the crucial buckets as Blaklad Shirts survived a Harbour Centre scrap with an 81-79 victory that forged a do-or-die match for the Finals berth on the PBL Unity Cup.

Injured and all, Reyes double-pumped his way to a feather-weight 20-A second scrimmage to lift the Super Sealers past the defending Champions in the Game 2 of their best-of-three semifinal series yesterday at the Gilmore College Sports Center.

"He didn't want to lose, he wanted a chance to play in the semis," said Sista coach Cuby Garcia of the 6-foot-1 rookie point guard. "Even with his injuries, he wanted to play. So he'll be leaving any way. He deserved that last shot."

Reyes, who one action despite a pulled groin muscle, provided the highlight of the game that Malabanan connected of his three-pointers.

"Credit goes to Mal-Banan," said Garcia. "He played well in a tender. He stepped up more than anyone else."

Malabanan, a second-year 6-foot-4 forward, drilled in nine of Sista's 13 points in a three-minute stretch that pushed it ahead, 58-49, late in the third period.

Gilmore's Heather Hess Bakelumbo turned in a veteran in the top seed forged a knockout battle with a 71-61 victory against Team Bakelumbo in the other Final Four duel.

Ariel Cardenal and Bakelumbo hook three-pointers in a tie that featured a run of triples for a 63-53 Bakelumbo lead in the final three minutes.

"It was clutch," said coach Lugi Tablo of Cardenal, who shot eight of his 15 markers in the final period. "We took it upon himself, stroot one big and took the big shots."

Malabanan impressed with 22 points and grabbed nine rebounds for the Super Sealers.

Although the game-winning shot was only Reyes' ninth point of the game, the Fil-Am stand-out registered a game-high eight assists and three steals in 17 minutes of action.

Ryan Arabe, who joined Batang Pier with 24 numbers, trained regular that cut the margin to 79-76, before feeding Will Ramos in the tied play.

Ramos set his chamber to recover Sista's lead to three, 81-78, with 12.3 seconds left.

Chico Lanete missed a potential game-tying triple in the buzzer.

The Scores:

First Game

HARBOUR CENTRE 79—Arabe 20, Lanete 17, Gotiaco 12, Ramos 10, Ayaay 8, Cabahug 6, Ramos 4, Bakelumbo 0, Cardenal 0, Ramos 0, Ramos 0, Ramos

Puentevella: RP will lose SEAG overall title to Thailand

By Jane Nikaura

THE PHILIPPINES' CHEF-DE-MISSION to this year's 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand says chances every measure believe that the host nation will retain the overall title it won the Filipinos.

Monico Puentevella, also vice-president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, expects the Filipinos to end up second this time.

"A decent second (overall behind Thailand)," said Puentevella.

The Bacolod congressman said that besides the trend that the host country has been winning the overall since 2001, the Thais have shortened the field whenever the biennial event stops outside their territory.

Puentevella, along with ranking POC and Philippine Sports Commission officials, arrived yesterday from a three-day summit sponsored by the SEAG Federation Council.

Her first sports officials are already scrutinizing the scenes in the Thais, but the odds are simply stacked on their favor following their successful staging of the Games in the past.

"Every time they (Thais) host the games, they always come out on top," said Puentevella.

Thailand hosted and won the inaugural of the regional meet in 1959 followed by overall victories in 1975 and 1985 (with Bangkok before hosting it over again in 1995 Chiang Mai, the first time the games were held outside of the capital city.

A total of 460 gold medals from 43 sports are at stake in the 24th edition of the games set to be held in four satellite venues in Thailand scheduled on Dec. 9-16.

The games, with Sukhon Kachasoon previous in Ish, will officially open on Dec. 6 but football and shooting will kick off festivities as early as Nov. 29.

During the SEAG Federation Council meeting, the exact events were added, bringing the number of medals at stake to 460 from 441, which was approved during the council's annual meeting last year.

Out of the 46 events added, 35 are contested gold-medal golfeteals for Team Philippines and the additional events from dressage, traditional boat race, diving and billiards/snooker to clash each bringing the overall event to a new two-years-ago.

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE

Lady Archers best Letran; SSC rips UST

By Romina S. Aurero

LA SALLE TUNNED TO ITS GUEST PLAYERS TO SURVIVE A GRITTY LETRAN, 25-22, 20-18, 20-25, 25-17, yesterday and snap a two-game losing skid in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

In the first game, Adrienne Lomibao scored an unreceived single was after three losses, toppling Ateneo, 16-25, 20-25, 25-23, 25-20, 15-13.

UP fell to 2-1 with its second straight defeat.

MBU. The Sweetening dresser and Amy Gustavo in their losing end of the Lady Archers forcefully regarded comeback attempts by the Lady Knights with attention and crossover hits that put Letran's defense in disarray.

Mariampet Augustino shares and Michelle Datuin joined Ha Ja Sulle effective in the second set when Datuin closed it up at 16-11, from a seemingly unstoppable 19-11 La Salle lead.

Aduna and Bonita, together with Sulle, however, scored on their respective attacks to end after the effort as the Lady Archers took a four-point lead.

Although Letran cashed one in Sulle's and Aduna's fingers to take the third, 25-22, the revitalized Lady Archers could not be denied in the deciding set, this time protecting another 19-12 lead.

The win raised the Lady Archers' record to 3-3 and kept them on target for a semifinal seat.

Letran's chances of entering the five-team semifinal round dimmed further as it remained in the cellar at 1-5.

ATTACK! Thai guest player Kanchana Jindarat slams one to all Robinsons standout Suzanne Roces and Jason Gavarra maneuvers before the opportunist can bring back point. Jindarat was even honed off the arena (below left).

Like in their previous win over the to, second University of Santo Tomas Tigresses—three hard-fifty flames and the—the Lady Eldress landed as proven pleading guest player Suzanne Roces, who sparkled home with a game-high 21 points on top of 20 kicks.

Ateneo also dropped the first two sets but took the next two to overcome erstwhile-tied La Salle in 5-1.

Ateneo, which lost point player and playing assistant coach Rondessa Jindarat to back spasms early in the fifth set, dropped to 3-2.

Gregorio attending cage draw

NEWLY INSTALLED SAMAHANG BASKETBALL Pilipinas executive director Rikkido Gregorio left for Aspac yesterday to attend the drawing of lots in the Fiba-Asia men's championship slated on Thailand next month.

There will be a total of 16 nations on stallion-ish, tabled into four groups in the tournament. Defending champion China heads all the nations that will be shooting for one available slot in the Beijing 2008 Olympics next year.

Asia's top four teams have been spread evenly in the four groups, with the Chinese in Group A, Lebanon in Group B, Qatar in Group C and Korea in Group D.

The draw would be very important, to ruling teams from each group will advance to the quarterfinals.

And coach Chot Reyes said the draw will play a big role in the Philippines bid to rule on Olympic berth, but he is unsure of the fact that the Asian nationals if Asian team doesn't make it as successful finish at the tourney.

"We're gunning for the best," Reyes said. "But realistically speaking, with the kind of teams playing, yeah, it's a big problem."

Manong R. Castillo

Filoil s'finals: Lions, Archers slight picks

FORTIFYING IT AS THE LAND GRABBING wave hosts bagged the slight favorites in the respective quarterfinals in the semifinals of the Filoil Flying V Preseason Basketball Tourney from 11 of The Arena in San Juan.

The La Salle Green Archers battle the Bethlehem University Bobkings in the 4 p.m. opener while the San Beda Red Lions take the Immaculate of the Last Red Warriors at 6 p.m.

Expected to dazzle for Green Archers are such players as veteran guard Tyrone Tang, JC Cortez, Dindo Villanueva, James Madrigal and Nico Salva for the.

The winners will battle for the Warrior from 4 to

ALIBI! Rookie talks about the 2007 Bingo Bonanza RP Open during yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's Greenhills. With Rookie are (from left) retired Gen. Edgar Aglipay, Korean First Lady Amelia "Ming" Ramos, and PSC czar Jolly White.

Chen, Pi top attractions in RP Open badminton

WORLD-RATED GLEN HONG AND JI HONG (no kinsmen the skin fold) when the 2007 Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open Badminton Championships stages its July 10-22 at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

Chen, the world's No. 9 from China, will head the event's singles cast, with the only-ranked Pi, the unranked Pesabuenan originally from China, will be the prince to watch in older play.

This marks Bingo Bonanza's second straight sponsorship of the Philippine Open after its one-year stint with Carnation Milk early where Malaysian Child Hashim and Indian beaten Sonia Mehwal topped in the singles event.

"It brings us pride and joy that the world's shuttlers call be back on Philippine soil, giving our countrymen the finest to watch them inspire and ignite some more great stars in badminton to emerge to compete with the world's best," said Alfredo Gonzalez, president of Bingo Bonanza Corp., during the launch of the event in yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's on 20-Ave.

Other guests were Philippine Badminton Association secretary-general Jonathan "Ming" Ramos, PBA vice president retired Gen. Edgardo Aglipay and Junior Affairs, VP of the organizing BBC.

"We'll try our best to win," said Ramos. "Unfortunately, some of the world's best players retired/ semifinal on in this region. If we add different countries, we can invite them and help bolster the event to make it more dynamic to help before we could really be at par with them. The Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open is a step to make us achieve this."

Aside from China, France and host Philippines, other teams playing in the $125,000 tournament are Belarus, Ukraine, Japan, Slovenia, Russia, Canada, Australia, India, Switzerland and Iran.

The event serves as an Olympic qualifying tournament and will give host players the chance to obtain world ranking points.

Chen, leaders-in-rank winner of the China and Denmark Opens last year, will be coming off a runner-up finish in the recent Asian Continental Championships and is a semifinal seat in the Indonesian Super Series.

Chen is the only Chinese shuttler to if not long for a month stints, along with another Bingo player Ji Hong (no kinsmen) and Pesabuenan Zenaida Jones (who's married). Yang Ming Zhou Jinping and Tan Qing Bin (no jokes names are Hong Kong and Hong Kong second-seeders).

Also otherwise confirmed participation before both of Japan, Iran sub-Iran tournament and France/Bingo (men's singles) and Singaporean and Singaporean (women's singles) and Singaporean and Singaporean (men's singles), Sanjay Chandrasekhar from Germany (men's singles), Andrew Dabeweth of Hong Kong (women's singles), Philip Bonsens and Dabeweth (mixed doubles) and Sri Venkatesan Ramaraj from (men's doubles).

RACING POST
BY TOP CHOICE

Spencer derby slated Friday in Makati

THE SPENCER NATIONAL DERBY ON FRIDAY AT THE MAKATI CELL team celebrate the second anniversary of the PCL Turnfit and Amusement Corp. Venture to close operations (Makati) on 10/10/07 Invested is racing division under Mike PCL Executives Alex DeMatti and Ramon Ang.

CRITICS call the 2012 Olympics logo "disintegrated" and "nonsegment."

London Olympics logo draws flak

LONDON—DESIGN CRITICS DISmissed the jagged logo unveiled on Monday for London's 2012 Olympic Games as messy and dismal with the most charitable saying it was brave but poorly executed.

The logo, four jagged-like pieces forming the numbers 2012 and coming in a range of colors from hot pink to electric blue, was unveiled to newspaper by Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee.

"It used an early indicator of the dynamism, modernity and determination with which London 2012 will leave its Olympic mark," he said.

Design and advertising professionals were less enthused.

"The predominant emotional buchromic always a sense of disintegration. What I almost see is a map of London divided into boroughs," said Chris Bolley, who teaches creative advertising at the London College of Communication. "The 2012 is difficult at first sight to pick out."

Dietrich Bangerter, editor of Creative Review, a leading visual communication magazine, said people with whom he had spoken about the logo were "quite shocked and quite outraged."

Bangerter said it was too bleak to stand the test of time such as logos for past Games, such as Munich 1972, but he still found some positive elements in the design.

"It doesn't have big lies or a Union Jack or a crown on it, so the designers should be to least applauded for not going down the sexually predictable route," he said.

He also said the logo was well suited for the multi-media age, lending itself to animation and online display.

On newsdesignnews, a popular online forum for designers, comments expressed their disappointment. Reuters

Roaring Rafa on a roll

Spanish hotshot sweeps Hewitt, gains quarters

PARIS—RAFAEL NADAL'S TRIUMPHS ARE always accompanied by lots of grunting, so the French Open must be more difficult than his ferocious make it look.

Still unbeaten at Roland Garros, Nadal, who celebrates points with loud screams, completed the men's quarterfinal lineup Monday by sweeping Olivier Rochus, 6-3, 6-1, 7-6 (5).

The two-time defending champion is 18-0 lifetime at the French Open, which seems to be getting easier for him for the first time, he conceded the final eight without losing a set.

"I played my best match of this tournament," Nadal said. "Olivier is always a very good test and a very tough match, because he is a winner. I'm happy with my game today."

A particular showdown looms Sunday between the No. 2-seeded Nadal and top-seeded Roger Federer, who broke his first French Open title to complete a career Grand Slam.

Nadal's opponent Wednesday will be fellow Spaniard Carlos Moya, the 1998 champion.

"I prefer to lose against him than against any other player because he is a great friend," Nadal said. "He didn't let off things to me when I arrived on the court, on court."

Moya declined to take credit for Nadal's dominance. "I don't think he learned anything from me. And if he did, he did it much better than me."

The other quarterfinal Wednesday will be between No. 12-seeded Igor Andreev and No. 6-seeded Nicolas Kiefer.

Andreev, who eliminated No. 3-seeded Andy Roddick in the opening round, advanced to his first major quarterfinal by rallying past No. 30 Marcos Baghdatis, 2-6, 6-1, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5), to reach the final eight for the second consecutive time.

"Last year, I honestly didn't expect to be in the quarterfinals," the 20-year-old Andreev said. "I was pretty much satisfied with my achievements. This year is much different."

The marquee pairing in the women's quarterfinals Tuesday features two-time defending champion Justine Henin against eight-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams. It's a rematch of their contentious 2003 semifinal at Roland Garros.

Henin had beaten Nadal in four of their six previous meetings, but on clay the matchup of the Belgian was a mismatch from the outset. Nadal won 16 of the first 20 points.

"He just hits the ball so much differently to anyone out there," Henin said. "His spin off his forehand—it's quite amazing. By my body work I own."

The No. 5-seeded Henin led for most of the third set and held advantages of 4-1 and 5-4 in the tiebreaker. But he blew an easy forehand to make it 5-all, then crushed another easy forehand on the final point.

Nadal displayed outlet wizardry from between points, when he drew applause for an over-the-shoulder catch in the stirrings of a ball lobbed from the other end of the court. He's bidding to become the first man to win a third consecutive French Open title since Bjorn Borg won champion in 1978-81.

Moya overcame his relative inexperience to beat Jonas Bjorkman, 6 Roland Garros powerful. Moya was nonetheless the younger player Monday, and he swept the 35-year-old Bjorkman, 7-6 (7), 6-2, 7-5.

Wearing a shoreless shirt and his cap backward, the 30-year-old Moya hardly looked like an old-timer. But he became the oldest man to reach the final eight at the French Open since Andre Agassi in 2003.

Moya has won ten of his previous five match-es against Nadal. AP

RAFAEL Nadal lets loose a scream after beating Clayton Hewitt.

THE NBA championship series between the San Antonio Spurs and the Cleveland Cavaliers will feature superstars Tim Duncan (left) and LeBron James.

Spurs all ready for NBA Finals vs 'sneaky' Cavs

LOS ANGELES—IT'S ONCE thing standing in the way of LeBron James and Cleveland's first National Basketball Association title: a seasoned San Antonio team that has seen three championships in eight years.

Against long odds, Cleveland dismissed the Detroit Pistons in six games.

"They kind of sneaked up on everybody," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said of Cleveland.

San Antonio, which owns a record of five wins previous appearances in the finals in 1999, 2003, 2005, beats the first game of best-of-seven finals on Thursday (Manila Time). Game 2 is Sunday at the San Antonio arena.

"I'm not sure how sure they think it is since they've been there quite often considering their young ages and time in the league," Popovich said. "But they know it's the finals and that would take care of any possible complacency I would think."

It was one's great surprise but Antonio is in the 2007 finals but less outside of Cleveland experts of the Cavaliers in the finals.

The in-and-coming superstar James took the ball by the horns, showing Cleveland to a certified level in his fourth season with the Cavs.

But along with his individual heroics, which included a jaw-dropping 48-point eruption in Game 5 for which featured him scoring the last 25 points of his team, James also has received in a leader ... one who has been more than willing to share the glory with his teammates.

"There is no way we would be here in the Eastern Conference finals or winning the Eastern Conference finals if it was a one-man show," he said.

"It's never happened in NBA history, it would never happen in the NBA unless a team has one guy and he does it all."

James runs down reporters on Monday from NBA legend Michael Jordan, who said James is showing signs of greatness.

"Making [his case] is when you do it every single night," Jordan said. "It is expected of you and you do it. What just transpired was needed in the league, needed for Cleveland and needed for LeBron."

And there are four finals MVP honours. "I'm just hoping every once in a while they fix me the Spurs in there, in between the college highlights, that would be nice."

Cleveland now both regular season matchups against San Antonio, including spoiling the Spurs' home opener. The teams last squared in January in Cleveland where James scored 35 points to another win.

"We lost to them twice this season," Duncan said. "They've got a high right now, playing with a lot of confidence."

James led the Cavaliers to their first Eastern Conference title and now the possibility of the first championship in Cleveland in sixty-sport since the gridiron dynasty of the National Football League were the title in 1964.

Popovich reserved spotted taking this series as a battle between two champion tactics in the league.

"They wouldn't be in the finals without LeBron, we wouldn't be in the finals without Tim Duncan," Popovich said Sunday. "That goes without saying. But they still would not be in the finals, nor would we, if we didn't each have our supporting cast. Everybody else has to be."

"Teams get to finals and teams win championships, and there must be," he added.

SPORTS

Anton rules Hillclimb tilt for 14th title

MAKATI ACE CARLOS ANTON ADORO another entry in his sterling racing career by rolling the Cebu Philippine Hillclimb championship at the MC Initial Hill recently.

Through thrice-limited early third overall in the Otoki leg, it gave him enough points to claim the Rally of the Hill plum.

It was Anton's 14th national crown in 16 years of racing. His titles in sports utility include three championships in duties, two in hauling, one each from rallycross/dirt trials and Mitsubishi Toyota and six from Mitsubishi Toyota entries. He also has two automotive titles in Guam and beaten a victory in the GT duty/mini race to Verano, Italy in July 2004.

But his achievement in the Philippine Hill was his most memorable and challenging yet.

"I'm glad we clinched it," said Anton. "The competition was stiff with mode and I would only eye to 7500 rpms to against my usual 9000 rpms, so I am glad we got the points needed to win this title."

Jun de la Rhosal drove his Subaru STI to first place with 6 pts to Garcia in an Evolution 6 coming in second.

Anton was backed by Yokohama Autotrack and Mark Young Racing Team.

"Anton lived up to expectations and he drove very professionally with the title always on mind," said Mark Young. "I think this particular win will get stronger as the years go by."

Anton's teammate Alvin Santos finished a sthidder behind Anton in every leg, thus giving him on the points protection he needed for the title.

Inquirer Sports Staff

CARLOS ANTON, expertly driving a Mark Young-sponsored Honda CRX, negotiates the tricky route en route to becoming the first Philippine Hillclimb champion.

RP pool bet misses 300

IT WAS THE HOBLEY TURN TO shine in the 39th PBC-Bensen International Open Tenpin Bowling championships at the SM Mall of Asia Bowling Centre late Monday night.

Hobley, a national pool maker, found his rhythm on lanes 9 and 10 and fired scores in an 8300 score in the third game to bowling top straight strikes rating a 13-pound Storm Hot Ball.

But like pool teammate Richie Holden, the bespectacled 23-year-old who earned purely with a 146, fell short when he missed the 7 pin in the 11th game en route to a 289.

"The break of my ball was not strong enough in I missed," said the Dang Bowling Association team member after missing the foul.

Hobley closed out with a four-game tally of 1066 and secured ten-third spot of the event's Open singles

As a tie with fellow national pool member Tyrone Grupposo and several pins behind Pedales.

Revalerosa Valdezcom clung to top spot after bowling 696 earlier in the round finished by Tuchenpin.

"It would be excellent if a Filipino should score a perfect 300 in the PBC Open before the foreigners come," Philippine Bowling Congress executive vice president Julius Dy-Liacco said.

Sharing the spotlight on Day 5 of the tournament were veterans Jojo Canare and Bong Gee, also the PBC secretary general, as the Tuchenpin duo combined for a 705 to pace the ladies' Open double competitions.

They relegated the erstwhile top tandem of Apple Pasadas and Mary Ann Reyes to second at 704 while Tessa Prince's Bride de Luna and Marie Reyes were tied with a 720 compet.

Inquirer Sports Staff

NBC TOURNEY

Montana-Davao stuns Pagadian

DAVAO CITY—MONTANA PAWNshop-Davao stunned Surewell Napalit no. 50-94, on March 2 to the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC Invitational Cup basketball tournament at the Ateneo this gym here.

Jerry Fernandez spurred the from the start as Businessman Amanda Quibod's lowdays snapped a five-game losing streak in the contest.

Fernandez shot 7-of-13 from the floor and sank 16 of his conference-high 13 free throws to lead all scorers with 30 points.

Jerard Amarel and Yuvelyn Espinosa ably backed Fernandez as the Jewelers posted their third win in 13 games.

Mayor Sammy Co's Explorers had five players in twin digits, but the Jewelers proved smaller to overthrow.

The league is being supported by Kidapawan Lanes, Spring Cooking Oil, Tetuan Phils., San Miguel Beer, Calbee, Sun Cellular, Firefly Lightings, Trans Asia Shipping Lines, Mobitel, Nestor's Spring Basketball TV and Viva Prime Channels.

The scores:

DAVAO 94—Fernandez 30, Amarel 12, Espinosa 12, Nuevo 6, Amarel, Cuenca 7, Abrasa 6, Rojas 6, Aurelio 0.

PAGADIAN 80—Tupa 18, Tendero 15, Gonzales 14, Sedo 12, Pelayo 11, Nuevo 2, Bautista 2, Espinosa 0, Alejandro 0, Peralta 0, Alejandro 0, Dador 0, Gerbert Jayo 0, Ramos 0.

Quarters: 16-19, 28-38, 61-64, 94-80

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BUSINESS

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May inflation up but still within range

VICE President Noli De Castro and Benjamin Philip Romualdez (left and center) study the mineral samples on display at the 7th Asia-Pacific Mining Conference exhibit at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City.

BSP: Rate may be higher at 2.4%, but poses no threat

By Michelle V. Rivera

INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICES SETTLED within the official forecast at 2.4 percent in May from the same period last year, as the stronger peso and absence of supply disruptions tempered the rise in the cost of food and other commodities.

The inflation figure for May was well within the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' projected range of 2.1 to 2.9 percent.

The BSP had said weather conditions would not affect agricultural production, and that the rise in oil prices would be relatively benign.

"Inflation in May[—within]in the BSP's assessment of some short-lived pressures from [C]hina and the emerging oil prices," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters. "We expect a continuing environment of low and stable inflation."

The May inflation rate was 0.1 percentage point higher than the 2.3 percent recorded in April, and brought the average inflation rate for the first five months of the year to 2.7 percent. The average was still relatively benign and did not threaten the BSP's full-year target of 4 to 5 percent.

Core inflation, which factors out volatile prices of selected food and energy items, remained at 2.6 percent. The same rate posted in March and April.

According to the National Statistics Office (NSO), all commodity groups—except fuel, light and water (2.0%)—recorded a slowdown in inflation.

Inflation rate for food, beverage and tobacco (FBT) decelerated to 2.6 percent in May from 2.8 percent in April, while that for clothing hit 2.5 percent from the previous month's 2.0 percent.

Inflation rate for services slowed down to 1.9 percent from 2.3 percent, while that for miscellaneous items eased to 1.6 percent from 1.7 percent.

Housing and repairs registered a 1.4-percent inflation rate, similar to the April figure. Gas PLH posted a faster rate of 4 percent from only 2.2 percent the previous month.

For food alone, inflation rate eased to 2.6 percent from 2.7 percent. The food item accounts for the following food items: fish (relatively stable), 1.5-percent inflation rate); rice (1.7 percent), dairy products (3.6 percent), fish (3.1 percent), meat/cereal food (2.3 percent), eggs (6.3 percent), fruits and vegetables (0.8 percent).

From beverages, SMC now wants to dip its hand in mining

SAN MIGUEL CORP. SOUTHEAST ASIA's largest food and drink firm, aspires to explore for iron, gold and copper in Mindoro province, according to a senior government official.

Angelo Reyes, environment and natural resources secretary, said that the company had already filed an application for exploration rights in the province believed to contain gold and nickel reserves.

San Miguel recently announced it would seek new growth engines by investing in non-allied ventures such as power, infrastructure and mining, after dominating the beer market for beer, liquor, dairy, poultry and processed food.

"San Miguel is looking at doing some exploration work in Mindoro," Reyes said. "This will be for iron, gold, copper."

Ramon Ang, San Miguel president, has filed for a mineral exploration authority, along with a unit of San Miguel, and Ayesco Ramos, director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

Ang has personal investments in other sectors such as cement, and a part of a consortium that tried to bid for the Philippines' national electricity grid in February.

San Miguel previously said it would raise its capital funds to 7.5 billion shares representing about 19% of the company, from 6.3 billion shares ($611 million). From the present 4.3 billion shares, at least funds for no new investors, pay down debt and finance possible share buyback.

During the 7th Asia-Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition, Reyes also announced that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has approved an additional 11 mineral agreements and exploration permits, which are expected to generate at least P525 million in investments over the next two years.

The newly approved projects include six mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) and five exploration permits (EPs).

Hard Rock Mineral Trading Inc. received its MPSA for the exploration and development of nickel and cobalt deposits in Santiago City.

East Coast Mineral Resources Co. Inc. received two separate MPSAs for its nickel, chromite and iron ore deposits in Zambales province.

Foreign currency deposits on the rise

FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS (FCDs) or deposits posted a double-digit growth in April from the same month a year ago, marking the rise of capital inflows into the country, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

Deposits made to the foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) of banks hit $38.348 billion in April—a 36.6-percent increase from the $15.564 billion recorded in the same month last year.

On a month-to-month basis, the latest amount of deposits in foreign currencies was a 6-percent higher than the $36.677 billion recorded in March.

The government's economic managers claimed that the rising inflows of capital signaled that the country was already regaining confidence of investors brought on by its improving macroeconomic fundamentals.

The Philippine economy, as measured by its gross domestic product, grew 6.9 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier. It was its strongest performance in 17 years.

The Arroyo administration has also cited its improving fiscal condition, marked by a reduction in the budget deficit, as key to attracting investor confidence.

The rise in foreign capital inflows and growth in remittances from overseas Filipino workers are credited for the increase in FCDU deposits and the strengthening of the peso to record-high levels.

But although the rise in the inflow of foreign capital and OFW remittances has the benefit of boosting aggregate demand and eventually economic growth, it has the downside of feeding up liquidity in the system.

The BSP has raised its concern on ever growing domestic liquidity

7-yr T-bond rate up 52.7 points

Rate increase due to availability of investment alternatives

By Michelle V Remo

THE 7-YEAR TREASURY BOND rate rose by more than half a percentage point yesterday, which financial analysts attributed to the emergence of competition in the financial market.

The 7-year bonds fetched 6.500 percent yesterday, up 52.7 basis points from its previous rate of 5.981 percent.

The volume of bids reached P32.09 billion, more than double the offering of P15 billion.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction ceiling was pegged at P40 billion worth of bids, coming in full the government's programmed borrowing for the auction.

Analysts said there was still considerable appetite for the long term bonds, given the high level of liquidity in the system. However, they said the government's bargaining power was adversely affected by its fiscal performance in the first four months of the year, which was marked by less than expected tax collection.

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Tan, who acts as officer-in-charge of the BTr while the government was still searching a new national treasurer, said the rate increase was due to availability of investment alternatives.

He said the move of the banks lowering P50 billion to offset the departure of funds to directly deposit at the central bank posed tough competition to government securities.

The BSP's move was among the measures adopted to mop up excess liquidity in the system.

Mayor Lim: What to do with Intramuros

ON JUNE 24, 1571, CONQUISTADOR Miguel Lopez de Legazpi formally founded the city of Manila, and called it "The Distinguished and Ever Loyal City."

With his fine ship Santa, Legazpi had sailed from Mexico and landed on Feb. 20, 1565. He carried three orders from King Philip II. To find a return route across the Pacific to Mexico; look for gold and colonize the islands.

As soon as he arrived in Cebu, Legazpi got sent one of his ships to look for the return route. Two years later, the ship came back to report that the return route had been found off Japan. Having accomplished the first objective, the colonization of the islands could then proceed in earnest.

He first settled in Cebu, and then moved to what is now Nueva City. He finally chose Manila as his base of operations. He persuaded Rajah Sulayman to cede what was to be also known as "The Christian City."

Legazpi started building from intramuros. The "Walled City" But he died on Aug. 20, 1572. His successors finished the project. Intramuros became the strongest fortress in Southeast Asia. Inside its walls, the Spaniards built huge cache, depots, stately residences for top officials, churches, convents, seminaries and schools. The most imposing edifices were the Governor-General's palace or Apostolic, and The Cathedral.

To all its glory, Intramuros was the first western style city in the Far East. It preceded Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur.

The best houses of the Intramuros is four buildings, guarding the mouth of the Pasig River. It is also the site of the worst atrocity committed by the Japanese occupation forces. Some 1000 Filipinos and Americans suffocated in the dungeons.

Amid a free barrage call, when he wrote his Illiano Adios, it a shelter by itself.

In the battle for the Liberation of Manila in February-March 1945, American artillery reduced Intramuros to rubble. At this day, it has not been fully rebuilt. It remains a terrible scar in Manila's landscape.

What should be done? Obviously, another tobboy which is a disgrace to Manila, should be relocated. Surely Harper Lim should be able to find a decent place for the squatters to live in.

In fact, barrings, it, structures should be built, patterned after the Visitor's Center in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. (A reminder should be sent to Gettysburg to see how the battlefield has been preserved as a national monument.)

The main feature of the center will be a miniature replica of Intramuros in all its past glory, as well as replicas of the environs of Binondo, Tondo, Santa Cruz, Sampaloc, Malate, and Ermita. There should be a gallery of governors-generals and archbishops, of heroes and scoundrels.

A 35-minute historical film from the Spanish conquest between Legazpi and Sikatuna to the destruction in 1945 should be screened regularly in a small theater.

Part flamingo and the walls should be declared a national monument to be left undisturbed forever. The grill course should be dug up and the moats restored.

The Cuisine and the Department of Labor and Employment should be relocated to Quezon City where they belong.

Entering into the main landscape, a new 50-story Manila City Hall, with a huge parking lot should be built. The present City Hall is hopelessly outdated and overcrowded.

There will be enough space left for a huge shopping mall that will outshine anything now in existence.

Then, Intramuros will again be the centerpiece of the Philippines. And Mayor Lim will go down in history not as Dirty Harry Alfredo the Great, maybe!

Napocor to revise procurement policies

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER COMING UNDER FIRE for allegedly purchasing power at very high prices, National Power Corp. will be revising its procurement procedures, particularly in the areas of fuel management, suppliers and logistics.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar said the agency would make adjustments and refinements in its procurement procedures to make them more customer-focused.

The agency decided to make the move following its review of existing procurement policies and procedures.

The adjustments will be based on, and will consider the provisions of Executive Order 40 relating to the agency, he added.

To be given emphasis, he said, would be Napocor's existing budget-setting methods—especially in developing the bidding process, as well as its study on interagency level policies, and mandatory rebidding requirements.

Del Callar said it was also important to streamline and shorten the time frame's bidding process, without sacrificing transparency and compliance with government procurement rules.

He said there should be a good balance between fuel procured via the spot market and those bought under long term contracts.

While long-term contracts were good during periods of rising prices, he said there were those instances when contractual prices were higher than current levels.

In an earlier interview, he said the state firm was recommending changing the procurement rule from the current over split between fuel purchased on the spot market and those attached to long term contracts.

He said Napocor also proposed to extend the coverage of long-term contracts beyond three years.

Napocor fuel management department manager Melvin Quijano said the state firm was also thinking of changing the pricing scheme for its long-term contracts to reflect market prices which move every week.

4 firms rise up to answer MRT 7 'Swiss challenge'

By Rose T. Chikasuda

FOUR CONSORTIA HAVE SHOWED THEIR INTEREST to take on the so-called "Swiss challenge" for the MRT 7 project, according to a Department of Transportation and Communications official.

The government hopes to award the project by the end of the year, said Guillen Montesclaros, DOTC undersecretary for rail.

"Four entities got the bid documents and would submit their respective bids on June 25," Montesclaros told Malacañang reporters. "Then technical and financial reports will be reviewed first, and the best qualifying bid will have to be matched by the original proponent, which a Japanese[-led] LRT Corp. Ltd. (JLL), in 30 days. Other[wise the best challenger will get the job]."

Under a Swiss challenge, a firm is afforded the chance to match the offer of the highest bidder. The DOTC official declined to reveal who the challengers are.

MRT 7 is a 20.4-km rail line that will run along Commonwealth Avenue, Regalado Avenue and Quirino Avenue Extension up to San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. It will have 14 stations and connect to the North Rail section of MRT 3.

JLL managing director and chief executive Eli Lewis earlier said that his firm is ready for fast-tracking bids and that he'd make a[bid]er to $1,215 million proposed within a month here.

JLL has devised a project cost[-]benefit study of $1.9 billion and submitted documents to the government, offering to be a co-lender to[the] debtor, and has an internal rate of return of 11.7 percent. Its bid also has a real estate com[ponent for residential and commercial units, including a new mall in Bulacan.

"There will be a $360-million equity investment and $926-million debt financing," Lewis said.

A number of foreign banks have already expressed interest in bidding for the loan.

On the real estate component, the consortium plans to construct 2,500 residential units and 500 office units every year on 274 ha of land in Bulacan. Universal LRT will also build a 22-km access road and 25-ha bus and train depot.

Rails for the rail line, designed to[run] on the Kiel Avenue and Concho[n]ville corridor, will be pegged at an average of P27, and will go operate[d] by

Under the proposed contract, government will support the MRT 7 project by advancing $100 million to Universal LRT for it[s] re[al]

PARALYZED?
GO OUT ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.
FREE RIDER
Portable Scooter
FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

May inflation up ...

From page B1

mobile (3.9 percent), meat (3.7 percent) and rental and [re]pairs (3.4 percent).

The price trend of 46.2 against the US dollar in May, stronger than the 52.86 finish in the immediate[-]last two. Average gasoline increased[by] double digits, which helps show down overall inflation.

Felix Alcala, economist from the University of Asia and the Pacific, said the increase in consumer prices in May was due a result of higher demand by households and increase in power[-]generating fee for electricity.

With the end of electioni[-]related spending, Alcala said inflation may post more benign rates in June and July.

But he said inflation could pick up in the second half, when companies normally schedule their importation. Alcala said prices could reach the[hi]gh[ ]average of between 5% to 5.2 percent for the full year.

Alcala said that, with inflation kept at benign levels, the BSP would not tighten its monetary policy and instead have more room for higher consumer demand and foster a stronger growth.

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From beverages ...

From page B1

sehold, dissenter and iron [de]velopment in Luzon, Antique (tin) [de]posits, and another project involving in Libis, Surigao del Norte.

Benguet Philippines Inc. was granted the right to explore for limestone in La Union, while Apex Mining Co. Inc. would get to develop gold, copper, silver and zinc resources in Compostela Valley. Boscogan Nickel Corp. is[ ]interested in the[ ]for a project in Palawan.

The recipients of EPs were Ivanhoe Philippines Inc., Colossal Mining Corp., and Metro du Oro Mining and Industrial Corp.

About P1.06 million in investments are expected from the initial exploration activities of the six new MPSAs, while almost P10 million in mineral exploration funds have been allocated for the five new EPs.

[Six of these 11 new projects are from foreign partners. Amy G. Remo, with a report from Beatrice

Foreign currency ...

From page B1

which it said could cut the government's inflation target of 4% if left unchecked.

For the source, the BSP last month opened a facility whereby more depositories of banks could directly park their funds with the central bank. The BSP also offered special interest rates for government securities and other[ ]corporations (GOCCs) that would deposit their investible funds in the central bank.

The interest rates offered to the GOCCs are higher than rates on government securities with comparable maturity. The increase was aimed to reduce the excess liquidity in the system and help ensure that the government's[ ]borrowing program would be met.

The BSP earlier reported that money supply, as measured by the M3, grew 20.3 percent in April from a year ago. But[ ]the[ ]BSP said a double-digit level of growth in domestic liquidity is anything less than 20 percent. Otherwise, inflation targets may be[ ]too fast. Michelle U. Remo

Shares fall 0.40%

From page B1

remained choky after recent sharp falls, they stirred.

The composite index closed 14.8 points lower at 3,618.14 after moving between 3,594.92 and 3,632.96.

The all-share index fell 7.26 points to 2,296.81.

There were 92 declines and 53 advances, while 53 stocks were unchanged.

Volume amounted to 4.46 billion shares

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Editor Cesar D. Maglonsong
MOTORIN

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

A look at Cebu Auto Show 2007

Text and photos by Alan Ally

ALL ROADS LED TO AYA in Cebu as World Trade Center Cebu hosted its second Cebu Auto Show last weekend. In the Ayala open parking lot, a custom-built air-conditioned tent provided the venue with more than 5,000 square meters to covered floor area.

Aside from the car brands and accessories that exhibited in the show, a car competition was held two days prior to the show. All the seven category winners to the competition including the most coveted Best-of-Show winners were also displayed in the exhibition area.

Winners

A modified Honda EM hogged top honors as Best of Show winner and its Street Expressive Sports Car exhibit another notable winner from a private Ford Fiesta. Mitsubishi Asia Pacific was meticulously entered by his owners.

The jeep-cum-competition with a turret machine gun and other military accessories scanned from various parts of the world. It has been with the owner's hands for at more than half a century and during its restoration, they purposely left a bullet on its metal sheet. Rust would be a favorited by a G.I. soldier during the war. This battle-scarred classic entry was a surprise winner during the competition.

Fighting back

In a province where there are several fatal jeep accident deaths at almost every show season of Metro Cebu, the local auto industry is fighting back by actively supporting safe motorist events like the Cebu Auto Show. A few proud to sign, SBS and Equitable Bank held auto loan small loans encouraging new vehicle sales.

Among the automotive brands that participated in the Cebu Auto Show 2007 were Chevrolet, Hyundai, Kia, Honda, Mazda, Mercedes, Ford, Mitsubishi, Mahindra, Metal, Suzuki, Ford, Yamaha, Total, Top Gear, Toyota and Yamaha.

Organizers of the Cebu Auto Show are the same group behind the recently concluded Manila International Auto Show (MIAS 2007), which brought in world-famous most performers from South from the United Kingdom. Andrew Bells, marketing manager of Total Philippines, commended the organizers for being able to elevate MIAS to a show of international taste and decided to co-sponsor their events.

Looking forward

The demand for motor vehicles is quite strong in this region particularly with a robust export economy as well as good inflow of OFW (overseas Filipino workers) remittances. Aside from a developed industry, Cebu is also a hub for high-quality furniture, which is not surprising that the option cars that participated in the show competition have very good point finishes.

Encouraged by the thousands of visitors that went to see the show the organizers are looking forward to next year's show which is expected even more so numerous.

HYUNDAI display

A MOTORIZED Pinoy MWar II Mahindra jeep is complete with artillery

ONE of the models of the Yamaha booth once took the Best Garnish award

iRAP: Making roads safer

ON THE ROAD

Inky Arnaiz-Mendoza

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA—FOR 10 Philippine motorists, the most exciting news coming from the 2007 Conference Week of the FIA here is that iRAP may be rolling over here.

iRAP (International Road Assessment Program) supports the Make Roads Safe campaign of the Federation Internationale de Automobile (FIA). The Paris-based global organization that is further known for governing motor sports such as Formula One and the World Rally Championship. It has 96 FIA member clubs in the Philippines. Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) was invited to send delegates to 2007 Conference Week, thus this column.

High-risk roads

iRAP does for roads what the NCAP (New Car Assessment Program) has done for cars, in that cars targeting high-risk roads where large numbers are killed and seriously injured, and to improve the safety of roads through safe programs of safety engineering—from pedestrian crossings to roads to houses—could reduce the number of fatalities and casualties.

Of the 1.2 million people who die each year, 600 million roads are injured or permanently disabled in road accidents annually, more than 85 percent occur in developing countries. Because of iRAP road deaths in high-income countries are expected to fall between 2000 and 2020, but they are likely to increase by more than 80 percent in the rest of the world. Working with the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and the World Bank, iRAP has reduced the around death toll in Europe, the United States and Australia. In the United Kingdom, half the high-risk roads have been eliminated.

iRAP model

The question is whether the developed country iRAP model will work in developing countries. There are still many countries in which fundamental road safety education and enforcement (seatbelts, helmets, drunk-driver and general adherence to traffic regulations) are not in place. In these countries, basic infrastructure such as clear signs and road markings is needed if road users are to know what they are expected to do and if the police are to effectively enforce traffic laws.

However, in many developing countries including the Philippines, occupants of privately owned buses, converted pickup trucks and minibuses are at high risk in run-off crashes, intersection crashes and head-on collisions.

Pedestrians

Aside from these, pedestrians accounts for between 40 and 75 percent of all road deaths, mainly while crossing a road where safe crossing facilities are not provided and walking along the road where there are no footpaths or sidewalks. Motorcyclists and moped riders also figure in a high percentage of road deaths, especially in Asia where up to 70 percent of all road deaths are motorcyclists or moped riders.

iRAP has been supporting in five developing countries on under roads safety and three other there. In pilot projects in Malaysia, South Africa, Costa Rica and Chile early this year, road inspections were led by the local automobile club and he consolidated RAP team (EuroRAP and AusRAP and ASAP). The projects were supported by research institutions, governments and road safety organizations with iRAP providing training, manuals and web tools to build and sustain successful capacity.

Process

The RAP process involves five steps:

1) Define the road network where fatal and serious injuries are likely to be concentrated;

2) Generate affordable, large-scale countermeasure packages; 4) Estimate costs, casualty reduction benefits and a risk of economic return in road;

3) Prioritize high-potential and work safety upgrading program and so on.

The inspection method used to assess roads can be done manually by using "driver through" inspections with rating equipment or specialized equipment and using video collection and following way-saving.

Rates of return

Affordable road infrastructure improvements can set road casualties on a significant reduced scale in the short, medium and long term. But this is only possible if whole roads and networks on which large numbers of deaths and serious injuries have taken place across good economic rate with the application of effective countermeasures. Rates of return are high, rarely less than 100 percent per year and often much higher.

Building on the strengths of the pilot project in Malaysia, iRAP plans to focus on the "next highway" and implement more developing country programs. A high-level meeting may be held next year in Malaysia to show the hands how iRAP surrounded tours and those groups. Including the iRAP projects in the Philippines and Singapore with their national auto club in each country providing the industries. In the Philippines, the Asian Development Bank and Road Fee Fund are likely sources of funding, according to AAP director Errol Ancheta, who also attended Conference Week.

Nissan holding 'Imagination Factory' design forum

NISSAN MOTOR CO. LTD. HAS BEGUN bringing its culture of advanced automotive design through a series of design forums called the "Imagination Factory," a first for an automotive manufacturer. The design forums aspire to tell the story of how the company's design team draws inspiration from Mother Nature, environment, personal values and society to drive their design process.

Starting in Singapore in August 2006, "Imagination Factory" has made its way to various countries in Asia, most recently Taiwan. Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. recently hosted the event at Eslite Bookstore in Taipei. The Taipei design forum included panel discussions between Nissan designers and local designers from various fields, and a workshop for design students. Future possible locations for the forum include Australia.

Design to return to HP

By the last quarter of the year, the "Imagination Factory" will find its way to the shores through the joint efforts of Nissan Philippines Inc. and Universal Motors Corp. It will showcase Nissan's design philosophy and the creative development process involved in designing a car. Invited as the keynote of the 70-02 and other major car styling of the Nissan, exemplary automotive designs that surpass a person's imagination and expectations.

The "Imagination Factory" is also aimed at encouraging students who want to pursue a career in car or industrial design, as well as raise public interest in automotive design. The forum in Manila will be opened to the public to provide visitors with a closer and feel of Nissan's design products.

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MANILA (MB) PHILIPPINES, INC. (MB) (PLDT) is the 2008 Reader's Digest Trusted Brands Gold awardee under the car category, in an awarding ceremony held at the Peninsula Manila on 6 June. PLDT was the only Trusted Brands winners were recognized by Reader's Digest as market leaders in their respective categories.

Since 1996, Reader's has been a consistent Trusted Brands awardee. "This would not have been possible without the continuous trust and confidence of our subscribers and readers," Reader's Digest Philippines VP Marketing Lani Rivera said.

Reader's "We are deeply grateful to new years of constant recognition and commitment to excellence," she said. We are truly honored to continue our confidence and to share their favorite brands with our readers and customers, and to continue to provide them with excellent service."

Winners of Reader's Digest survey have been voted by readers of Reader's Digest in more than markets, namely Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. An advertising-only category was added this year to include the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia as market research consultant, Reader's Digest Asia sent over 300,000 questionnaires and received 63,000 direct interviews. Nearly two percent of questionnaires returned were from the Philippines. Consumers were asked to name their single most trusted brand among 40 categories of products and services, and there are the brand based on six factors: relationship, credible image, quality, value, understanding of customer needs and innovation.

A victory for a greener motor sport

VISION ORIGINAL RACING WITH THE WEST leg of the Swedish leading Ola Racing—starting—the 2008—at Bilstorp Raceway in Skåne.

The night the season the other weekend, there, one of the very first manufacturers to offer a fully electric race car, the Think Ola. The Ola's electric motor is found in the rear of the vehicle and has a maximum power of 150 kW. Unlike most other 2008 models, the Ola is not limited by regulations, also because the first to drive the world to offer an electric car.

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DMIA seen handling 2M tourists with 'open skies'

By Dixie L. Lazo

THE CRESCADO Municipal International Airport (DMIA) could handle close to half of the country's targeted tourist arrivals by 2010, providing a big boost to the local economy as well as spurring development in the airport's immediate vicinity.

But this is happen, however, the govern-

ment must ease access restrictions on foreign carriers that are presently stymying the growth of the travel industry.

The projection was made by Isaka Clark Alliance for Development chairman Edgardo D. Buenaventura (shown) made right after he was called "open skies" policy amid the growing debate over the future of DMIA as an international airline hub. "Based on a projected 20-percent annual growth rate, DMIA can reach one million by 2010, "he said at a launch of open skies advocacies. "It can even reach two million."

The government hopes to attract as many as 2.1 million foreign tourists by the end of this year, and as many as five million by the end of 2010, under a plan set forth by the Department of Tourism.

If proven correct, Buenaventura forecasted could mean DMIA handling as much as 40 percent of all international tourist traffic into the country in three years.

Last year, the airport handled a total of 471,000 passengers on board 10 flights per week.

Already, DMIA experienced one of the fastest growth rates in terms of tourist arrivals anywhere in the world, dou-

(DMIA) to 47

Air Canada eyes RP flight

By Rene T. Chikiamco

MR. CANADA, IS considering flying to the Philippines.

Air Canada said serving the Vancouver-Manila route was one of its prospects but definite plans have be in place only after 2010.

Airline president and CEO Rhonda Berner said in a briefing that the commercial aviation of the Boeing 787 (around 200 seats) may encourage the Canadian flag carrier to fly to Manila.

"We always see the Philippines as a profitable destination, but the western opportunity may be in 2010 onwards, when the 787 enables efficient long-haul operations to destinations such as the Philippines," Berner said.

"The aircraft may be tested that year and may be available by 2010, and from there it may make financial sense for us to serve the route," he added.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner is a mid-sized, wide-body twin-engined jet airliner, which is scheduled to enter commercial service by May 2008.

The aircraft can carry between 220 and 330 passengers depending on the seating configuration.

Boeing has stated that the 787 a lightweight due to the use of composite material and will be more fuel-efficient than comparable earlier Boeing aircraft.

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From page B1

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CHEVROLET

RP to tap $1.3B in mutual funds

Financing for priority infra projects

By Michelle V Ramos

THE PHILIPPINES HOPES TO TAP a substantial portion of some $1.3 billion worth of funds earmarked by local and foreign investors for infrastructure projects.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said that during a recent investment exhibition held by the government's economic team, invited exhibitors from Japan had expressed keen interest in pursuing their recently established bank in infrastructure projects in the Philippines.

Teves said the Japanese investors were referring to two Japan-based groups that recently set up mutual funds earmarked specifically for infrastructure projects. Without disclosing the identities of the funds' owners, Teves said the first fund was worth $500 million and the other was worth $800 million.

The finance chief said there are two similar fund worth $500 million that was set up in the Philippines by foreign and Filipino investors, and that the government was also hoping that this could be channeled to infrastructure projects pushed by the government.

He said Japanese and other foreign investors were encouraged by countries doing business in the country by reports on improving gross domestic product growth, slow inflation and declining interest rates.

"We (the government economic team) were able to get the interest of Japanese and other foreign investors into investing in the Philippines. But of course, there are several factors that will make them transform this interest into actual investments," Teves told reporters in a press conference yesterday.

He said the Philippines was competing against other countries, like Malaysia, for investments in infrastructure projects.

Teves said investors would consider a country's political and regulatory environment, and macroeconomic fundamentals in deciding where to place their money.

The Arroyo administration has identified 10 infrastructure projects that it intended to complete over the medium term. These are the 895.5 billion-light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 6, which will extend from Barangay Dona Josefa in Cavite, the P39.4-billion North Luzon Expressway (the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway), Power Restoration Project, the Palanan-South Road, the Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Railway Project, the Quezon Highway Rehabilitation Project, and the Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project.

Teves said investors may turn to Japan soon requesting a rate of return of between 12 and 15 percent on their investments. Teves said he believed investing in infrastructure projects pushed by the Philippine government would given them three digit growth.

The finance chief said the government was likewise assessing ongoing efforts to put up more of this type of mutual funds.

SM completes ₱4-B notes issue

SM PRIME HOLDINGS Inc. YESTERDAY SAID it had raised ₱4 billion through the issuance of 5-year floating rate notes.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, SM Prime said the debt was arranged by First Metro Investment Corp. with SB Capital Investment Corp. as the co-lead arranger.

It said the proceeds would be used to finance on-going capital expenditure projects and "general corporate requirements."

The lender's share rose sixteen centavos but it remains primary institutional lenders subscribing to the issue.

"The strong market response to the Base Issue reflects the high credit quality of SMPH, as well as the local market's confidence in SM Prime Holdings Inc., "the company said.

SM Prime earlier announced it would spend P35 billion for 35 to 40 new malls and the upgrading of existing facilities over the next five years.

For that year, SM Prime two new malls will be put up—Metro Manila's Taytay town and Mandaluyong City. It also lined up the expansion of malls in Cebu City, Batangas and Bacolod, Quezon City.

Also up for expansion is the SM Mall of Asia, which will include the "Esplanade Seaside Terrace."

For next year, the company will focus on areas outside Metro Manila. Elizabeth S. Gatdula

North Harbor project generating interest

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lucson

THE MACQUARIE GROUP OF companies is keen on participating in the modernization and privatization of Manila North Harbor, company president and chief executive officer Peter Mapplebeck Moore said.

"Our group is very keen on this (privatization). We will do whatever it takes to help make this happen. Infrastructure is important for our country," Mapplebeck said referring to worldwhile's spending of Lorenzo Shipping Corp.

Mapplebeck declined to give the share of Lorenzo Shipping.

He, however, declined to comment on reported plans of Macquarie to invest directly in Manila North Harbor.

The modernization of the port was estimated to cost between P800 million and P1 billion.

The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) earlier invited prospective bidders to submit letters of intent (LOI) and their bids for the development, management, operation and maintenance of Manila North Harbor. The package includes a container terminal, the general cargo terminal and the passenger terminal complex.

Taylor building is a 25-year contract, renewable for another 25 years.

Interested bidders were given until May 21 to submit their letters of intent. Eligibility documents for the bidding should be submitted by July 2. Qualified bidders are given a set of bidding documents from July 16 to Oct. 5.

Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) general manager Oscar M. Seville earlier told the Inquirer that the port operator Internationale Container Terminal Services (ICTS) had expressed interest in North Harbor's operations.

Officials of Harbor Center, Asian Shipping Corp. and Magsaysay Shipping have also met with the PPA chief to inquire about the status of privatization plans for the port, which Seville said might be completed "within the year."

DMIA seen handling 2M tourists

From page B1

to try the luxury in less-cost carrier in NAIA's international (NAIA-3) and (2) subway.

The AMIA has already been (Iloilo and Cebu," said Fluentalez, adding that the province of is bound passenger traffic handled at the airport were tourists.

Because of this, he pointed out that the airport's capacity to cope with increasing capacities and economic growth by tourism sector, as evidenced by an 80- to 90-per-cent occupancy rate in hotels in Cebu City area.

Fluentalez pointed to statistics showing how much tourist arrival indicate by translate to the generation of one local job for at least one year, based on the average of P1,200 that each visitor spends. Fluentalez, who is also a close adviser of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, urged her administration to approve legislation to allow P600 billion which would ease restrictions on foreign carriers' access to DMIA.

The policy is being opposed by local airlines like Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific Air and Seair Spirit, all of whom believe that additional liberalization would put them at a disadvantage against foreign carriers.

During his speech to embodied's open diet forum, Fluentalez took a swipe at "the dominant local carrier"—referring to Lucio Tan-owned Philippine Airlines—which has flies to various destinations.

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IABC Philippines' new president for 2007-2008, Ron Tapia-Merk

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) provides the best venues for interconnection among communicators and clients. Through its website, publications, conferences, and database, and an active network of more than 14,000 communicators in over 70 countries, IABC offers excellent linkages for Philippine-based members.

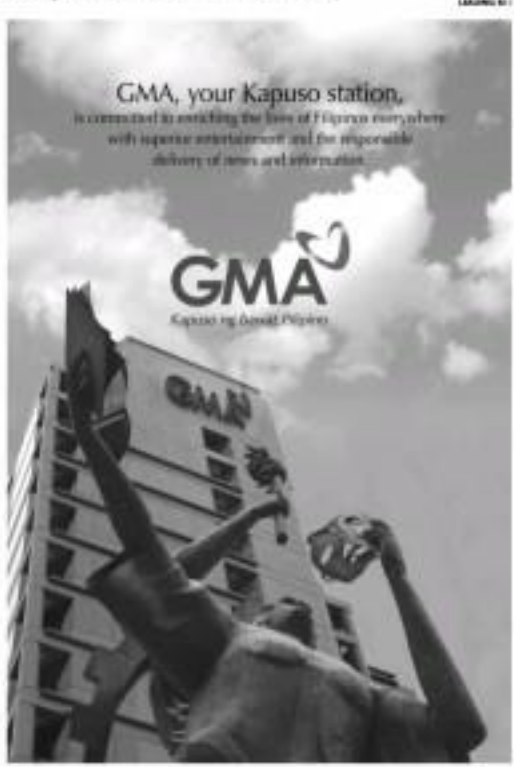
IABC Philippines equips communicators with the skills and knowledge to be an asset to this network, by providing products, services, activities and networking opportunities that help them serve their clients.

The leading PR industry association has a new leadership under Veronica L. Tapia-Merk of Merk Communication and consultant for Bank of the Philippine Islands , president; Rey Anthony David, Jr., Great Wall Advertising, executive vice president; Elpi Cuna, Jr., Meralco, VP for finance; and the board of directors are Ramon Osorio, ABS-CBN; Cosette Romero, Fleishman-Hillard Manila; Carmencita Arre, GMA Network; N. Jeric Sevilla, Jr., Manila Water; Virginia Ruivivar, Petron Corporation; Ramon Isberto, Smart Communications; Evangeline Pelaniero, Sound Images Productions Inc; and Chito Macapagal, Unilever Philippines.

IABC Philippines' annual activities include recognition programs such as the CEO Excel (Communication Excellence in Organizations) Awards, which is given to chief executives who have shown outstanding communication skills, and the Philippine Gold Quill Awards, which recognizes communica-

LEADING B9 >

IABC Philippines' officers for 2007-2008 are Veronica L. Tapia-Merk of Merk Communication and consultant for Bank of the Philippine Islands (second from right), president; Rey Anthony David, Jr., Great Wall Advertising, executive vice president (leftmost); Elpi Cuna, Jr., Meralco, VP for finance (fourth from right); and the board of directors are (left to right) Chito Macapagal, Unilever Philippines; Ramon Osorio, ABS-CBN; Evangeline Pelaniero, Sound Images Productions Inc.; Cosette Romero, Fleishman-Hillard Manila; Ramon Isberto, Smart Communications; Virginia Ruivivar, Petron Corporation (leftmost); Carmencita Arre, GMA Network (next right); and N. Jeric Sevilla, Jr., Manila Water (not in photo).



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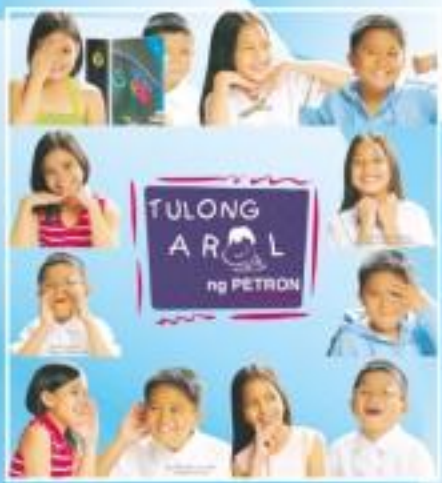

Communications has become integral to the success of individuals and organizations in this modern age. Thus, IABC Philippines is proud of its roster of publications which aim to advance the learning and career of today's communicators.

Casebooks I and II

IABC Philippines has come out with two editions of what may be the first local casebook on Public Relations, entitled The Best PR Programs and Tools. Edited by IABC board member and ABS-CBN's corporate communication head Bong Osorio, the books showcase winning entries to the IABC Gold Quill Philippines Awards. It is a perfect reference for communication students and professionals because it contains not only cases from top companies but guide questions as well.

The cases invariably demonstrate that effective communications strategies, and their implementation through various tools, enable managers to accomplish business objectives either in a shorter time, and at less expense or effort. The Best PR Programs and Tools was published by the UST Publishing House. For more inquiries, call 730-5667 or visit www.iabc.com.ph.

The Best CEO Speeches

The association is also submitting on another book entitled Winning Hearts and Minds: The Best CEO Speeches in the Philippines. The book will contain samples of persuasive and intelligent speeches delivered by the CEOs, given in the context of the Philippine or Asian business environment. The speeches will reflect the core values that the company stands for, and help other executives and professional communicators in producing well-crafted speeches that inspire, motivate, and mobilize employees and other stakeholders, and achieve specific corporate objectives.

Companies interested in having their CEO's speeches included may contact the IABC office at 730-5667 or e-mail info@iabc.com.ph for inquiries.

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About IABC Philippines

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS Communicators is the leading international resource of effective communication practice. We provide products, services, activities and networking opportunities to help our members achieve excellence in their work.

IABC links communicators in a global network that recognizes, establishes and supports the highest professional standards of quality and innovation in organizational communication. We are recognized as a professional association of choice for communicators who aspire to excel in their chosen fields.

IABC Philippines invites you to join the journey to a new age of shared meanings and authentic connections.

Let's talk business, industry and the profession.

Catch the courage of entrepreneurs, feel the development of workers.

Enter the threshold of a new tomorrow, let fire dip in global today.

Hand in hand, we will learn how to get our messages across. Move people to action. Clarify ideas. Gain effectively. Thrive in strife. Discover friends.

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Realize that in the exploration of new possibilities at the dawn of the Age of Digital Information, there is so much more we can do in Communication, than we have ever dared to imagine. IABC will be your partner in the boundless horizons of this astonishing new world.

Leading and linking Filipino communicators to the world

From page B7

tors who demonstrate expert application of thought leadership, technical skills and sustainable solutions in their programs; opportunities for learning and networking, like the Asia Pacific Communication Conference (Aspac) and the Communication Camp (Concamp); and various seminars on the latest trends and current issues in the industry. This year, the topics for the workshops include PR Measurement, Crisis Communication, Working with Media, and High-Impact Audio-Visual Presentations.

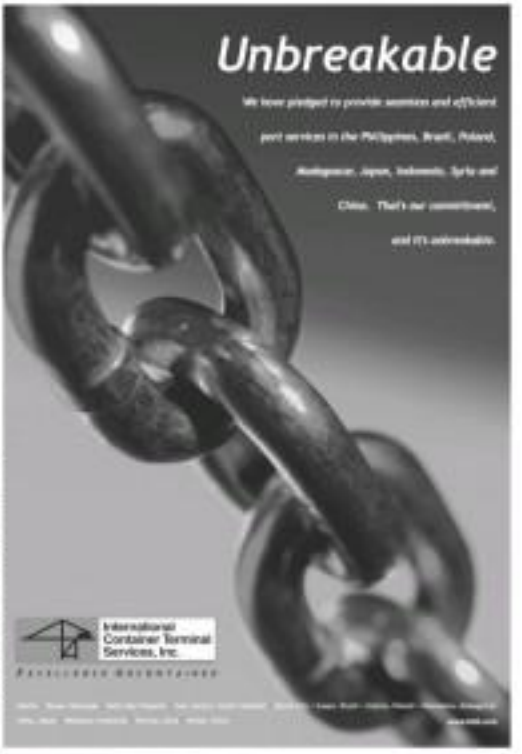
"We are encouraging all communication practitioners to be part of IABC," Rani Merk said. "Members are given many opportunities that will help them achieve their fullest potential in their discipline - including access to a network of professional communicators all over the world and regular updates on international best practices and latest trends."

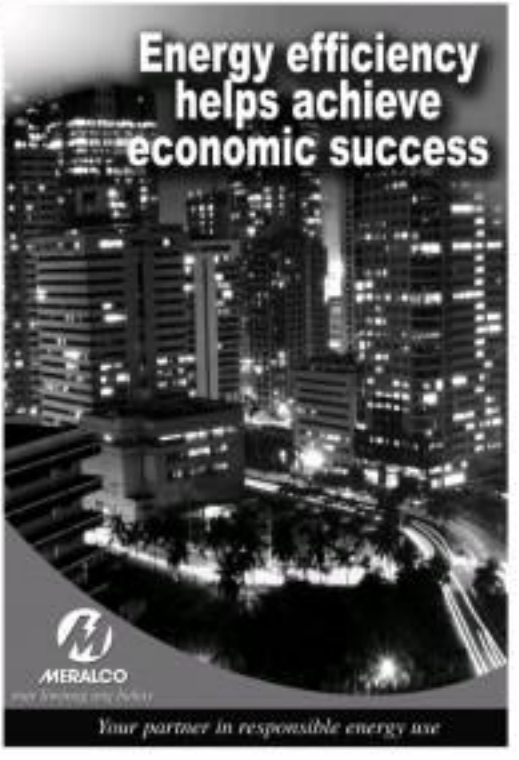
IABC members learn current best practices, and insights from today's brightest thought leaders in Communication World, IABC's award-winning member magazine and CW Bulletin e-newsletter.

Members also gain entry to the IABC International Conference, the leading international forum of its kind. Business communication professionals gather annually to learn the latest developments in communication and make connections that will advance their communication programs and careers.

IABC Philippines leads and links Filipino communicators to the world.

> IABC Philippines equips communicators with the skills and knowledge to be an asset to this network, by providing products, services, activities and networking opportunities that help them serve their clients





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BUSINESS

Moves to improve invest climate up

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS COUN-cil has teamed up with the World Bank's private sector arm to find ways to improve the business environment in the country and entice more investments.

In a joint statement, the public-private NGC and the International Finance Corp. said their priorities include streamlining transaction flows and reducing the cost of doing business.

Cesar Bautista, NCC cochair representing the private sector, said the partners wanted to see more consistency in the application and interpretation of business rules at the national and local levels.

"For this to happen, we need to have better information on how business regulations are implemented at both levels," said Bautista, who is a former Trade Secretary.

"The country's competitiveness would be advanced by hard objective data on how it performs against specific measures and standards and in comparison with other countries, and this partnership with IFC is a step in the right direction," he added.

Also, IFC announced it was embarking on a project which, with the help of the Asian Institute of Management, would measure the cost of doing business in 17 key cities in the country.

The project is aimed at developing consistency in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of business regulations through the creation of a common framework.

Jesse Ang, IFC acting country manager for the Philippines, said the project would provide a rich source of information on entry requirements and create a repository of current data and benchmarks on business regulations.

The IFC-AIM collaboration would take advantage of insights from IFC's "Doing Business Philippines" study which looks at regulations as well as the AIM's "Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Project," which ranks a set of competitiveness drivers using government data and business perception surveys at local levels.

Doing Business Philippines is an extension of the joint IFC and WB Doing Business report that benchmarks the cost of doing business in 175 economies.

The report is a benchmarking tool that is "objective, systematic and internationally comparable (and is expected to) help improve transparency and increase information flows by providing a mechanism to monitor the health of the business environment and serve as a catalyst for reform."

Lower power rates expected

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH THE ONSET OF THE RAINY SEASON, the Energy Regulatory Commission expects the National Power Corp. to cut power rates by 35 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh) starting next month.

This is due to the difference between the rates Iran's dry and wet season time-of-use (TOU) rates as provided by the ERC.

"The Commission has already been apprised by the ERC based on its decision dated April 23, 2007 regarding the TOU rate schedule," ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said.

The TOU scheme provides Napocor customers with flexible hourly rates, which are lower during off-peak hours, or between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., and higher during peak hours, or from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sundays and holidays are also considered off-peak times.

Rates are also lower during the wet season, or from July to December, as electricity demand usually falls during this time due to the colder weather.

Hydroelectric plants are also able to produce more power during these months. These facilities are considered among the cheapest sources of electricity.

According to Napocor data, its average TOU rate for the Luzon grid during the January-June period is at P0.0754 a kWh.

In the July-December period, this goes down to P0.7260, a 4% reduction or a difference of P0.0506 a kWh.

In Mindanao, the day season average TOU rate is pegged at P2.4980 a kWh, while the wet season average is placed at P1.9494 a kWh.

The reduction is a seasonal difference of P0.5486 or a 28% reduction.

The average TOU rate in the Visayas is the same throughout the year—P2.9879 a kWh—as the grid does not get electricity from hydropower sources.

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LIFESTYLE 2bU

Editor Chela Bautista Fermoso

Chief of Correspondents Pilar Pilapil

2bU! survey:
What are you most excited about this school year?

Text and photos by Miko Mark M. Salazar
2bU! Correspondent

WHILE SOME STUDENTS (okay, most) feel that summer break has just started and more time is needed for beach trips, late nights and lots of shopping, there are those who are actually counting the minutes to the First Day of School!

Check out why these students are excited about going back to campus.

TWEET Lagera

As a freshie in De La Salle University, I'm looking forward to new experiences, new challenges that come with them as well, meeting new friends and learning useful and productive things.—Tweet Lagera, 18

School is a whole new world!—Stephanie S., 16

New friends, new teachers to! being a grade older! loving it I can take on the new surprises and challenges I'll be encountering this school year.—Mika, Bloomfield Academy

Seeing the teachers and meeting new friends, plus making Facetz again.—Krista Fernando, 17

STEPHANIE G.

Buying school stuff and personalizing them, which I'm doing right now. I love covering my notebooks with plastic and making notes on all my stuff.—Tania, 15

Schooling

I don't have to wear the school uniform now that I'm a senior. I'm looking forward to that, as I'm making sure that I am ready with a lot of clothes.—Jo Ann Pepa, 21

Friday night-out!—Jessa Salvador

I'm most excited about graduating and getting out of my school.—Abbe Mendellan, 18

Preciously! I want to taste a little bit of the real world.—Brianna S., 19

I also look forward to suspended classes because of changes in weather.—Jean Bibanbian, 19

Thinking about the new people I'd meet and all the great things I'd learn from them.—Cheein Vasquez, 22, Center for International Education (will be sent to Northwood University in Michigan)

Cute classmates, cute schoolmates and cute professors!—Jeden, 15, SHA

I am pretty excited about making new memories.—Marbie Lanuevo, 18, UP Diliman

Another school year means another chance for me to improve myself with academic and extra-curricular accomplishments that I'm not entirely sure I am capable of accomplishing at the start.—Marilen Mandaloz

The coming school year is my last year in school, so I can't wait to finally be a senior and set all busy.—Estelle A., 21

Being with my friends again, and trying out new places to eat, in every lunch break.—Bijoux, 19, Mapua

Cute boys I didn't see last school year.—Sherman, Southridge

After a bunch of basic subjects last year, I'm looking forward to subjects that are more related to my course.—Helmut, 17

It's time to flaunt my new clothes, new shoes and new bags. Hahahahaha.—Anika, 18, Philippine Normal University

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Things I didn't do in school – but should have

By Nike Mark N. Sablan
24/7 correspondent

I SPENT TOO MUCH TIME obsessing over my notebooks.

When I was in third year high school, I had an obsession with perfect notebooks. At, I bought expensive Cardaco notebooks because they had the best quality paper, took out the spring, swapped the old notebook cover to plastic and with a box-cut page from a magazine, and viewed the whole notebook back-and-spring.

Inside, I'd use a red Hi-tec-pen to draw a margin, a blue one for the date and titles, and a black one for regular text. I also made it a point to write just on the right side pages for aesthetics.

At the end of every week, some classmates would borrow my notebooks and bring them home to copy from them. At the end of the term, most teachers would commend me for my perfect notebook.

It sure felt that good, but now that I look back, I realize that coming up with perfect copybooks wasn't much of an accomplishment. It's not as if one could end up a valedictorian because of them. What are perfect notebooks if you don't really read them right?

I finished my second circle.

I was a goody-goody from kindergarten to the first two years of high school. I would only hang out with the Top 5 students of the class, and I'd always sit at the front row. Heard of Academic Awards, the science geeks and the devout Catholics who had their privileges in mind.

When I became a senior, I discovered a whole new world brimming with fellow misfits, borderline-cases, suicidal loners, straight parents, Gothics and pervos. And they were all fun and interesting! While I was happy that I had finally met kindred souls and other amusing characters who love as much as I do, was to love really "dry Mcbeef" just like me, and played big with me in the computer room and field under the heat of the sun—in high books at that!

I didn't join clubs and contests.

Actually, I did. But I only now that I had joined them. School would have been extremely boring if I just studied for the entire subjects and then went home for dinner. While I got to be in the Math Club and Science and contests, even when I lost, I should have squeezed in more time for them. Extracurricular activities are fun and relaxing; and, they provide a taste of the real world. Oh, they look good on your resume, too.

I didn't raise my hand more often in class.

I know the answers most of the time, but I didn't bother to raise my hand because I was afraid I didn't have the correct answer in front my classmates would think I was really a bright student. I wonder now, if that was—I should not be punished by fear of not having the correct answers especially in public school? I also think you shouldn't care too much about what others might think. Who cares if they think you're such a know-it-all, especially if you're giving the answers?

I didn't study hard.

Sure that I'm pretty much clear with school, I realize how I could have gained higher grades, avoid some stress and even graduated with honors if only I had entered a bit more effort. I wish I studied harder and had paid more attention to my professors. But that's hindsight for you.

Now you know what to do in school. Enjoy!

E-mail the author at markmablan_fhs@yahoo.com

I now realize that coming up with perfect notebooks wasn't much of an accomplishment. It's not as if one could end up a valedictorian because of them

In college, I made sure that I still drew a line between me and my teachers, but I also opened myself to the possibility of friendships with them. Now, I am still best friends with someone who used cheap cafeteria coffee with some creamer, the subjects of my classes, poems and songs. I also felt bad that I had favored my social circle early on, thus depriving myself of many more inspiring and fascinating people.

I want you stay or become friends with my teachers.

In high school, I drew a huge line between me and the teachers. For me, they were paragons of perfection and inspiration who had the responsibility to educate us and telling more. I looked at them not as teachers—schools, adults), even considered them.

It was only during high school graduation that I experienced a "Before Sunrise" moment with a teacher. I was so surprised and delighted to discover how a cool person she was. She became instant friends.

Handwriting CSI

One's personality and disposition are manifested in the manner he or she puts pen to paper

By Denise Herlaso
24/7 Correspondent

MUCH OF OUR life and our successes depend on getting along with others. Studies have shown that couples in a happy relationship, for example, prove to be healthier and more motivated. A lot of self-help books serving as how-to-succeed manuals also emphasize smooth integration of the divers of social relations. Harmony with the crowd involves understanding people's behavior and personalities. This is especially true for people who are going to be with us all the time. For students, this coming school year, rain or shine, these people are their classmates and teachers.

If you a classmate, we get to know people's characteristics from their mannerisms, moves, habits and facial expression. Others also unconsciously manifest their personalities in clips of the tongue, body language and even in our style of dressing.

There's an broader clues, though, that also reveal a lot more of the way we write. Indeed, as with many things we see and smelly conclusions of our personality and disposition can show in how we put the pen.

Yes, the school setting, a closer examination of penmanship in the orally unexplored art and science of graphology. The term graphology was coined in 1871, proving that the practice and its principles have existed long ago.

Graphology is psychological tool used to understand a person's disposition, mood and to some extent, personality. Graphology has been utilized in psychology, in legal cases, even in application even to musician. The in vast of the applicant. It can also be used for self-awareness and as a springboard for reflection and contemplation.

Take your cue for it by first putting a sensor of the whole writing and then narrowing down to specific letters or the zones. It is important to note, however, to always contextualize the piece of writing, noting the conditions that are concurrent with the whole.

Three suggested methods will set you on your quest to learning handwriting analysis, as found in "Instant Insight," a book by Cash Steers. The following are steps you can do yourself to search out for:

Size

Take note of the size of the writing in contrast to the paper and to the hand. If the writing is small and close to one another, what would you instinctively read from the person? The normal probably come to the conclusion that this person is modest and doesn't want to draw unwanted attention to himself or herself. Or that the person may be hiding a little cramped.

Large writing suggests the opposite—a confident, outdoor-type and those fond of being attention-seeks to the limelight. The popular Walt Disney signature, for example, shows a round, loosely looped writing that suggests extroversion and effervescence.

Pressure

Heavy-handed writing or writing which makes a mark on the other side of the sheet is a clear indication of strong emotions. This person is putting a lot of determination and effort into what he is doing, perhaps too much effort. If the handwriting is also tight and forbidden, this may also indicate repression and a feeling of being overwhelmed or a need to regain control.

Writing, which is light, on the other hand, shows that the person has been sensitive a usually. Waking writing is also a sign of too much pressure or perhaps—other, sprawled out as well—laziness.

Margins

A big left-hand margin means this person is most likely a planner. He or she calculates his/her moves before executing it. This person is also cautious, and will think through a decision for a long time. A big right-hand margin, on the other hand, is an indication that the person is sociable—one who will always be on time, and meet the deadlines. If the right-hand margin is unbalanced, the writer is probably happy-go-lucky about deadlines and dates.

Margins on every side of a piece of writing means a very organized person who likes to be in control. He is a very disciplined and rigid world. This person is probably also very uptight, and not very natural in spontaneous. If there are no margins at all, this is probably someone who is very anxious person who has a lot to say and who might have difficulty bringing his emotions under control.

Slants

A fairly slow route to an individual's personality is to examine the slant of writing which slants down when a person with a dominant, pessimistic outlook on life. Take note that graphology readers may also be circumscribed and not the ultimate rule, the person who wrote it may be feeling exhausted at the moment or recently recovering from a illness. Be cautious in adding.

Writing which slants up, on the other hand, is an indication of optimism. This is a person who rises up to the occasion and believes everything will turn out well. This may also be an indication of wrong traits. The greater the slope upward, the more pronounced the trait will be.

Writing which slants to the right is a sign that the writer is an expressive, dynamic, action-oriented individual. It also indicates drive and determination. Writing which slants to the left, on the other hand, is a sign of a reserved, more withdrawn person who is not comfortable and not the ultimate rule, the person who wrote it may be feeling exhausted at the moment or recently recovering from a illness. Be cautious in adding.

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Shoe tips for rainy days

Here's how to help your poor footwear survive the wet season

By Angela V. Ignacio
INQ7 Correspondent

TIS THE SEASON OF TROUGHS THROUGH floods are again liable from looking like a drowned rat, you inevitably run the risk of ruining your new school shoes, not to mention developing foot odor if you're not careful.

If you want your footwear to make it through the rainy season, check out these tips.

• **Always bring an extra pair of shoes** (and socks, if needed). Certain types of black shoes tend to leave nasty blue-black stains on your feet or socks when they get soaked. That's why it's crucial for you to change shoes right away once you step out in the rain. If you're anticipating a major downpour, bring a pair of sturdy rubber boots or flipflops.

• **If you don't want to bring something bulky**, or if your shoes are made of rain-unfriendly material like suede, buy a pair of inkstick plastic slip-up boots that you can slip on over what you're wearing. Check out the department stores in malls and you'll find many cheap ones. Also, bring a waterproof bag or even a trash bag—any big one can use to put in your soggy shoes in case you get caught in a flood on the way to school.

• **Don't make a habit of storing damp footwear** inside the closet, or else the trapped moisture will cause the glue or rug to become soft. Moreover, can also create sudden odor to attack, empty-belly. If your shoes haven't been used in a long time.

Here's a handy tip we got from Queen Eye's fab fashion savant Carmen Kronkleyteuff: the insides with balled-up newspaper and leave it overnight so that it can absorb all the moisture. Unlike tissue paper, it won't leave sticky white shreds all over the interior, and it's more environment-friendly to boot.

• **Having a problem with smelly footwear?** Put a container of baking soda or some charcoal in your shoe closet to keep moisture and bacteria from accumulating.

• **Never leave your shoes out to dry under direct sunlight, especially if they're made of leather.** They can become cracked and dry as sandpaper, which can cause your feet to chafe. Strip up the source as best as you can and air out the shoes at room temperature.

• **If shoes are yellowish mud stains on your white canvas sneakers** that can't be removed even after intense scrubbing, here's a trick: either brush it with vinegar, or thinly rub some toothpaste on it. The white, opaque kind is best as it's not be a dye. Most of the time, you won't even notice the difference.

• **If your shoes are not skidproof** and you're afraid of slipping on a wet floor, a inexpensive solution is to dab the soles with any kind of nonskid. The downside to this is that it can get irritatingly sticky when you're walking so smooth surfaces, so do this only during emergencies.

Do you have a handy-daddy?

IS YOUR DAD A DO-IT-YOURSELF kind of guy? Does history time mean tool time to him? Is he a sucker for home-improvement projects? Is he in his element when he has something to do around the house?

When you go on shopping, does he head straight to the hardware store?

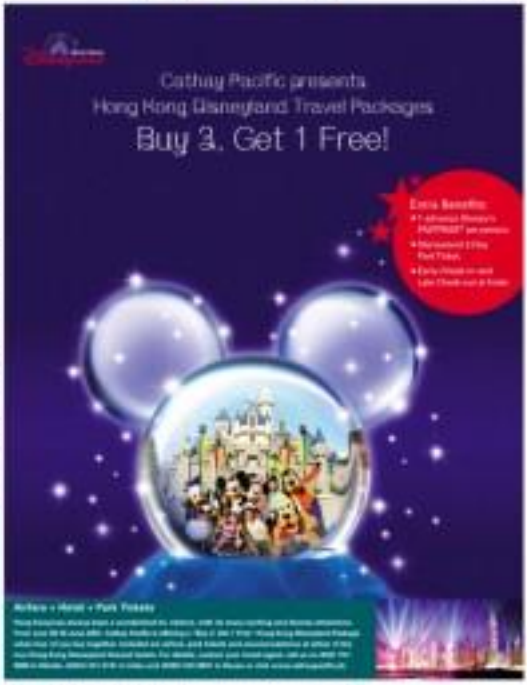
In 500 words or less, tell us about your handy-daddy and his latest or best DIY project. Send us a photo of him with his very own creation—a chair, a bookcase, a trellis, any furniture or home accessory that he made himself.

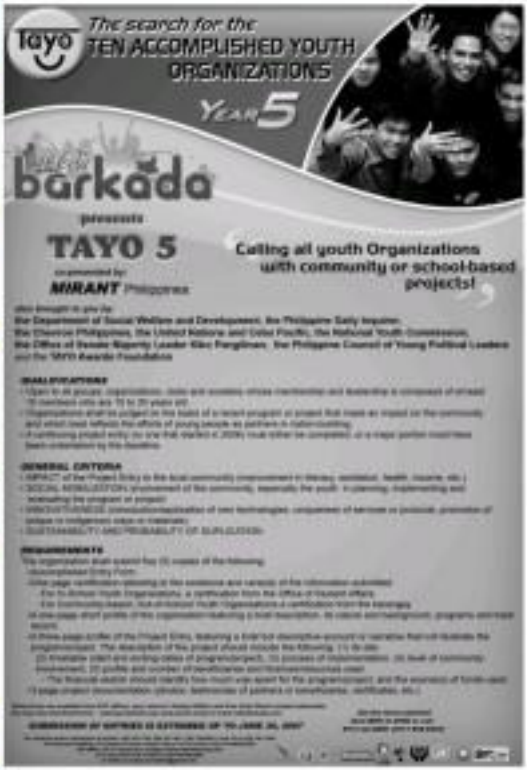
Join her with no photos will accompanied by be disqualified.

Inquirers Lifestyle will pick the best five handy-daddies from our readers' entries and will take them shopping in Marikina where they each will receive P10,000 worth of purchases courtesy of Handyman, plus a browsing P900 digital camera courtesy of Robinsons Appliances.

Include your name and age, your dad's name and age, your address, telephone number(s) and mobile phone number(s).

Submit your entry to Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor, Chino Roces Avenue, Makati, extension Lifestyle. Or e-mail to dad@inquirer.com.ph. Deadline for entries is June 8.





"THE IDEA behind 'Set Me Apart' was to capture the energy and eclectic style of anime," says Ely Buendia (left).

PUPIL promises to remain video for the new Animax theme song "Set Me Apart." Sporting pink highlights, Pupil "Bassist Jimmy Antiporda (left) is to support his brother Paul.

Youth, freedom and animé

By Nina Mark M. Sablan
PEP correspondent

Youth channel Animax acquires a new theme song in Pupil's "Set Me Apart," a song about youthful energy and individualism

MODEL Einar Ingebrigtsen and MLIS D' DJ Dylan host the event, which also introduces QUARK F artist Rhian Ramos as the new "it" girl at Animax.

QUARK Rosario

BRENT Javier

YOUTH CHANNEL ANIMAX believes in daring to be different, going beyond the ordinary and standing out in one's own style. This is why it chose local P-Pinoy band Pupil to pen and perform its brand-new theme song "Set Me Apart."

Pupil, which has been a staple in several Animax events all over the country is the perfect choice for the channel. The band is not only a unique and creative music force in the Philippines, it is also...just like Animax...an inspiration for young people to live out their dreams and passions.

Musically arranged and written by Pupil lead vocalist Ely Buendia, with lyrics from talent manager Dindo Montero and vocalist-musician Jonas Manalili, "Set Me Apart" is a catchy and inspirational rock song that encourages young people to go out of the box while still being their own special selves.

"The idea behind 'Set Me Apart' was to capture the energy and eclectic style of anime," says Buendia. "We tried to push ourselves very much to a three-minute song as we possibly could to reflect Animax's kaleidoscope of entertainment."

According to Montero, the song embodies the carefree naivete and courage of the youth, which is independence.

"At the title of the song implies, 'Set Me Apart' epitomizes the young generation's need to freely and confidentially express their individuality without being judged or criticized," she explains. "This is where Animax comes in as a youth sanctuary. Animax is a place where young people are united in their stand to be respected and lauded for their unwavering originality and distinctive look."

Judy Chow, director of Animax Marketing, says, "We wanted to create a song that embodies the spirit and essence of the channel and wouldn't the attributes and optimism of the youth generation. Our Animax viewers are trend-setters and leaders among their peers. 'Set Me Apart' puts down their inner thoughts and reinforces the meaning of being different. And what better way than for Pupil to create this inspirational song for Animax?"

Currently topping the charts at rock radio station 90.7FM, "Set Me Apart" also has a cutting-edge music video that features animation done by one of the top breakfast design and animation studios in Malaysia.

Following the band's eye-catching video for his tracks "Giliamin" (which was directed by Buendia and also at the locations of his people, extending the use of over a hundred "extra people" as production design, as well as a Halloween and family-centered and "Ordo ng Dilis" (directed by Pinoy Ong and King Pal. Jaor said noted for its minimalist production design and editing magic), "Set Me Apart" the music video features the band members of Pupil as animé heroes.

Besides exclusive, "It is going to be a surprise to a lot of people! 'Set Me Apart' is very special to us, in as much as it is the first time ever that we will see ourselves in animated form and by animax, no less."

Animax is a youth channel with a broad offering of programs and lifestyle activities that cater to the interests of young people. Aside from anime, Animax offers a dynamic lineup of highly-rated and popular original productions, music programs and cool lifestyle events like fashion contests and speed-dating events to connect with young viewers' social interest.

Catch the premiere of Pupil's "Set Me Apart" music video on Animax on June 6, 7 p.m.

E-mail the author at: nmarksablan_28@yahoo.com

LIFESTYLE

A new resort in Panglao, Bohol, combines natural endowments and manmade amenities

By Nilo Mark M. Sabio
2007 Co-respondent

BOHOL HAD ALWAYS BEEN A dream local destination of mine. Blame it on the Chocolate Hills which had always intrigued me. Blame the popular tarsiers which I had always wanted to see up-close.

Recently, the travel gods granted my wish and I had the chance to finally see Bohol and its Chocolate Hills and tarsiers—and even more.

I was billeted at Alona Beach Resort & Spa, the much-hyped all-suite beach-area luxury resort in Panglao. To be less than 20 minutes, our shiny double-cab was transported us from Tagbilaran airport to Alona, which promised to give me a sweet escape from all the hustle and bustle of the metropolis.

Once I set foot on Alona's white sands, I totally understood what the buzz was all about.

Alona is the last of luxury resorts and accommodations share top billing at this 36-hectare development. It's homogenous. It's exclusive. It's unhackneyed.

'Bahay'

The rustic island resort is composed of 11 single-detached thatched villas or bahay, each one built with sturdy construction materials and simply using bamboo, capiz and wood for a modern Filipino look, reminiscent of the (actual) bucolic resort in Palawan. Surprisingly, both resorts were designed by architect Bobby Mañosa, who is known to promote everything Filipiniana.

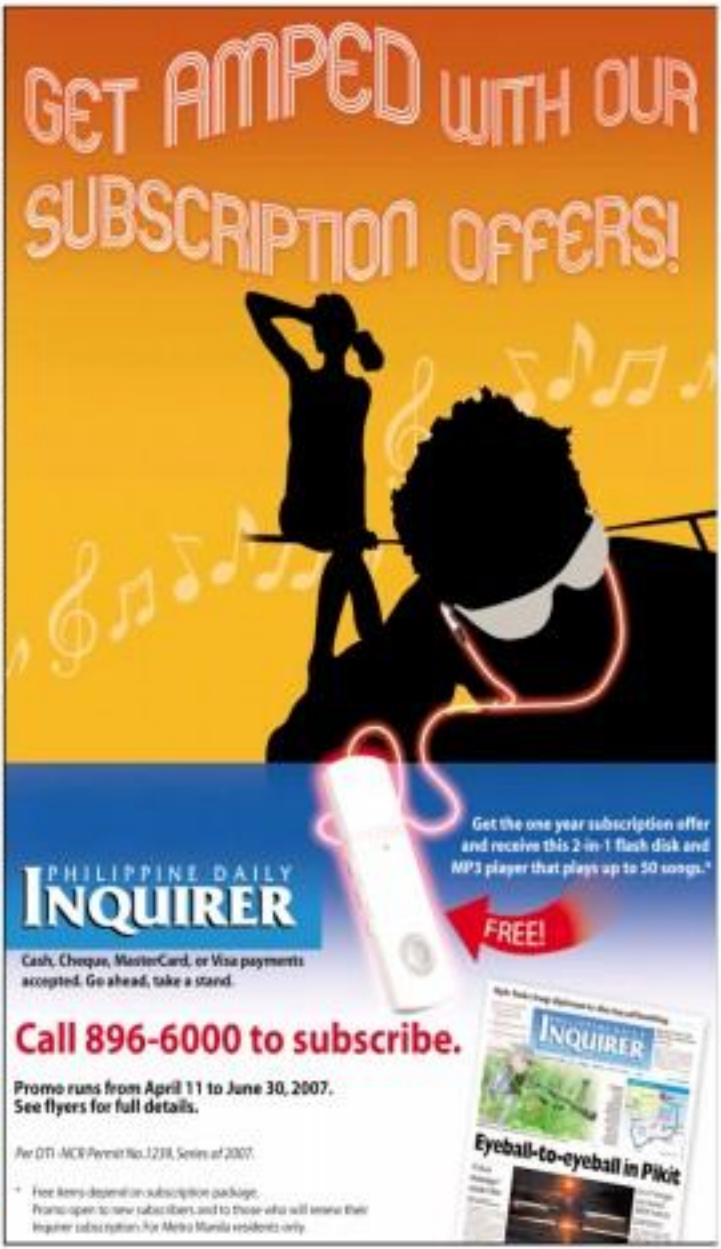
Alona's last four subscription villas with a whirlpool (good for two and an indoor garden setting), six private pool villas with whirlpool, three infinity pool villas with whirlpool, a family villa with a whirlpool good for four, and a presidential villa complete with a swimming pool and an outdoor spa.

The whirlpool villa I stayed in was both classy and cozy and it made me want to live there forever. My king-size bed was huge and I had the best sleep ever, thanks to the goose down pillows and high thread count sheets. My very spacious bathroom had a complete array of amenities, hygiene essentials and robes (bulky ones).

Everything was there inside my bahay: minibar, coffee- and tea-making facilities, safety deposit box, hair dryer, a composition, DSL/telephone access with two extensions, flat-screen television with cable, DVD player and even iPod speakers. My baby was complete! But I found it very tempting to just stay in the

(SEE OUR LAST D1)

PRIVATE whirlpool



GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

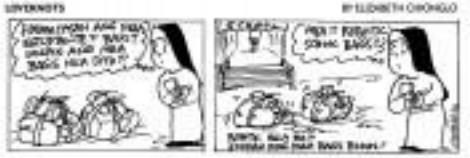
A. LIPIN BY JOSS ARREN

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY ROMY JUNIOR

NUTS BY PATRICK HUDDENHILL

LOVEBYTES BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO



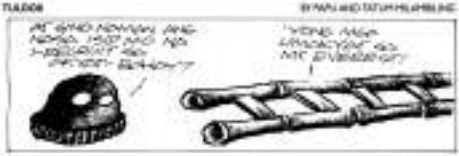
KYOKO AND KIDDY BY LYNN GARCILLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PANILAYAN

KIKO MACHINE BY TRIXIE ARREN

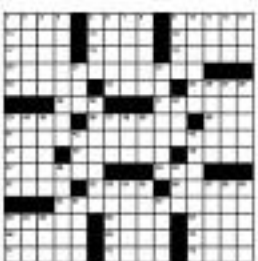
HIKIKOMORI BY JOHN ETTEDGUI

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM HILARIDEJRE

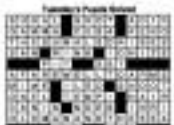


BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	5	2	8	6	9	1	4	
	7						6	
		4	3	7	5	8		
	3						7	
2					4			8
6				2		9		4
8					1			2
	2						1	
		1	2	4	3	7		

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Type and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	2	9	3	8	5	4	1	7
7	3	8	1	4	2	5	9	6
4	5	1	7	9	6	8	2	3
9	7	2	8	5	1	6	3	4
5	8	6	4	3	7	2	9	1
1	4	3	6	2	9	7	8	5
3	1	7	5	6	8	9	4	2
8	6	5	9	1	4	3	7	2
2	9	4	2	7	3	1	5	8

On the lap of luxury

JET-SKIING is just one of the many water activities the resort can arrange for its guests.

NATURE
PAGE 01

From page 01

whole title.

But that the view outside isn't as good as inside the hotels.

The private island resort is awash with colorful bungalow-like, kind of paradise and other native elements that give Fahaya an exotic village-like feel. The stars are all out during nights, while the sea (supposedly) are to just stare at it for long periods of time during the day.

There is also the Lantern Restaurant which offers sumptuous meals, cocktail drinks and a spectacular view of the ocean, too. In fact, dining can be arranged right in front of the beach, candle-style, or all-house by the poolside for those who love the water.

FOR THE COMPLETE Fahaya experience, a massage is a must.

My most favorite part of Fahaya is its infinity pool, which is so vast and inviting one wouldn't think twice about taking a dip. If not for the cool swim-up bar overflowing with various cocktail drinks and fruit shakes, you'd think it was a natural lagoon.

Activities

Owned and run by husband-and-wife team Richard and Phoebe Lim, Fahaya is sure to be a hit among locals and tourists with its world-class amenities, unrivaled hospitality and top-quality service.

Fahaya also provides guests with a variety of fun activities.

For the athletic, Fahaya has the facilities and equipment for sports activities such as volleyball, badminton, table tennis, jet-skiing and snorkeling. For those who want total relaxation, on the other hand, a soothing massage can be had under the stars or even inside your own villa if you seek a little more privacy.

Guests also have the option to visit Dubai's famous destinations such as the Chocolate Hills, Lobos Island and sunset cruise. For water babies, fun activities include island-hopping, snorkeling and scuba diving at Balicasag Island and dolphin-watching at Pamilacan Island. All these can be arranged at the resort upon arrival.

Now that's saying a lot for a 100-percent Filipino-owned resort.

Fahaya's exotic charm has already lured celebs such as Sir Gilbert, Cheeko Garcia, Tourism Secretary Ace Durano and even the lovely Iza Zobel.

It has definitely lured me as well and I'm pretty sure others will be lured into going there, too. Expect some major splurge if you aim to defend, thanks to Fahaya.

Pity fly to Maldives when we've got a piece of paradise here in our own soil, right?

Call 7259307 or 7251597, e-mail reservations@fahaya.com or visit www.fahaya.com

E-mail the author at mariealice_lim@yahoo.com

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KAYAKING in Small Lagoon

LAST FLING

The backpacker's way to El Nido

SNAKING around at Simizu Island

El Nido is not the exclusive domain of dollar-toting tourists. All you need, really, is stamina and a lot of time

By Mari-An C. Santos
STAFF Contributor

WHEN TALKING ABOUT El Nido's pristine beaches, people often are hushed tones. Like the Ark of the Covenant or the Shroud of Turin, the place is elusive, mysterious and chilling it must. Everyone states at great expense.

But it turns out El Nido is not the exclusive domain of dollar-toting tourists. All you need, really, is a stamina and a lot of time. We went there recently for the Thanksgiving's ays Festival.

There are two ways to go to Palawan from Manila: the Philippine, Cebu Pacific and Philippine Airlines all have regular flights to Puerto Princesa. The fare averages P5,000 and takes an hour. Manila Sky does it to El Nido in a meager puddle-jumper with 2.

If you want cheap, honestly dirt cheap, Negros Navigation and Super Ferry both sail there once a week. A ticket is around P2,500 and the trip takes about a day and a half.

Once in Puerto Princesa, make your way to the bus terminal at the New Public Market in San Jose. Buses leave between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. the fare is P200. From there, it's a nine-hour bus ride north through Roxas and Taytay before you reach El Nido.

The views on the way are varied: undulating hills, blue waters, rocky coastlines and lush forest with huts. Bring your fan and a headache, as the road transforms from paved to rough soon enough.

Expensive but delicious

The town of El Nido is named after the expensive but very delicious bird's nest soup of Chinese cuisine. People find, by the Tayon Panorama cliffs. But majestically is the overall best overview the resthut area, to the north and Pu-ao, the last is P200. From there, it's a nine-hour bus ride north through Roxas and Taytay before you reach El Nido.

WINDSURFING at El Nido's main Bulac Island

The town of El Nido is named after the expensive but very delicious bird's nest soup of Chinese cuisine. People find, by the Tayon Panorama cliffs. But majestically is the overall best overview the resthut area, to the north and Pu-ao, the last is P200. From there, it's a nine-hour bus ride north through Roxas and Taytay before you reach El Nido.

The beachfront is accessible from the municipal hall. The view is a big time of day: a relaxing, and still crude your fatigue away! Accommodations are plentiful, depending on your preference and budget. Affordable cottages are located just a few paces from the beach.

El Nido is a quiet town, and so most its life concentrated around the area surrounds Aurin Avenue, head of the Municipal Tourism Office, locations the hot chef "only 14 percent of our food souls are still carrying."

You can choose to spend your days swimming and sunbathing. Take some good shots if you plan to go cliff climbing. The view on the jump-off point for island-hopping. There are so many secondary islands, and within these islands are different spots that you can visit. Your guides usually offer packages that will take you to several locations in one go. These cost at P500 per person, with a minimum of four persons per boat.

Among the most-cool islands are cool to be Lagen, Miniloc, Malcoho and Two Monks Islands. Keep your eyes peeled for cliff-plants that just might entice beside your boat as the waters of Helicopter Island.

Snorkeling gear are also available for rent and, for an additional fee, can come with packed lunch. It is fabulous idea for first Cuts after snorkeling lessons and have snacks for rest.

Watch the sun set on Sun Bugs or Bacuit's, then enjoy dinner as you listen to the waves. For more island-nightlife, go to Bulay Talaw along Cuba Beach. The ambience is ethnic folk, and it's the regular home of artists and musicians. The atmosphere is so laidback, you can grab the percussions and jam with the performers.

For breakfast, hearty meals are served by Bernard's. Bulay Talaw and Aplaya Restaurant. Get your supplies from Socrates down just across Aplaya Restaurant, which sells practically everything, even binoculars.

The people of El Nido are kind, friendly and reserved. So on this break, you won't be hounded by vendors selling goods or offering massage services. It's also safe to leave your sarong and slippers on the sand's a very swim, and all. El Nido, with its fine sand and blue green sea, is best appreciated by just jumping into the water!

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Too young for politics?

Or more of the same old politics?

MayMay Navidad and her father's legacy

I made the right decision to enter the one place I thought I could not stand—politics'

By Cristinon Faye B. Tordesillas
24/7 Correspondent

SHAKESPEARE ONCE WROTE: "SOME are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

Three years ago, MayMay Navidad was thrust to greatness. Shortly after her father was elected councilor of Digos City, Davao del Sur, he died.

She was subsequently appointed to assume her father's position in the City Council.

Now at 27 years old, she is running for a second term as councilor under the National People's Coalition.

It helped that before she was appointed councilor, she had already served as councilor for the then-sprawling Cotabato.

"To accept the appointment was not an easy decision. But I wanted to continue what my father started," she explains. Besides, "Digos City is where I was born and where I live. My love for the 'Live City of the South' was another major consideration."

She credits her mother, who heads the City Social Welfare and Development Office, for guiding and encouraging her.

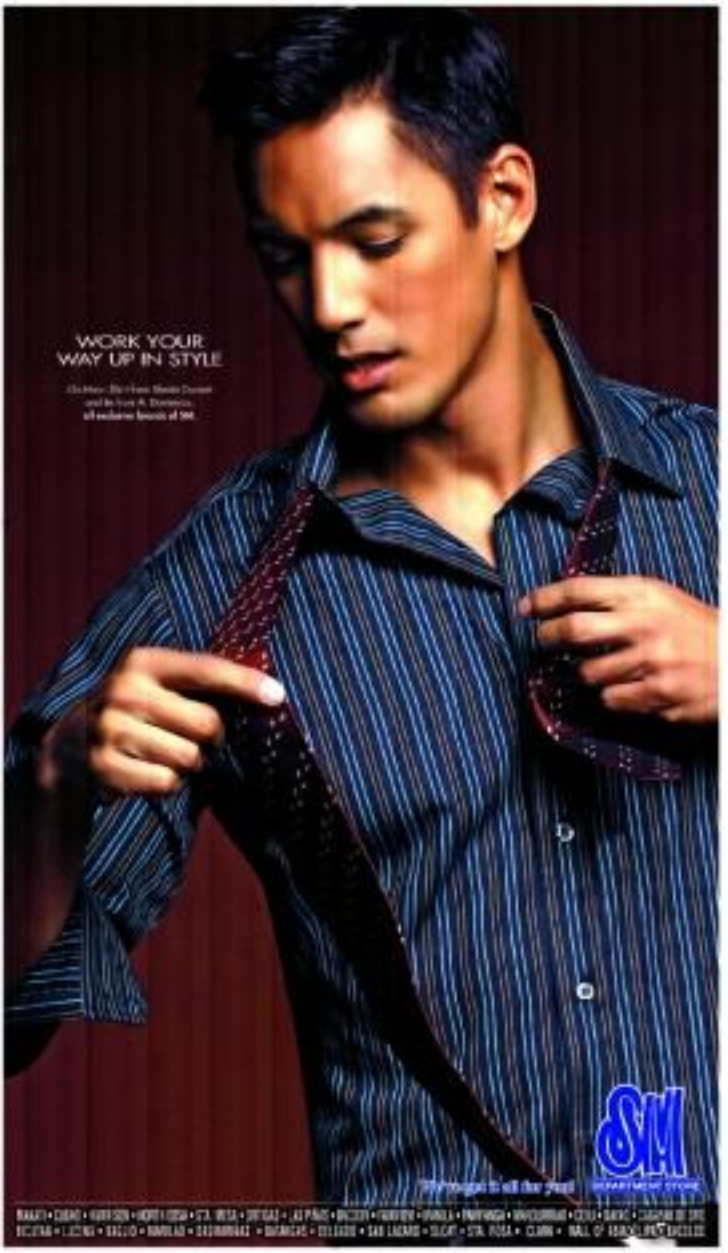
Thus, in her first term, she immediately organized for the donation of water pumps and started proposing bills to improve their city.

Soon, colleagues would start going up to her and thank her for her projects. She recalls, "It was then that I realized that I was on the right track. I made the right decision to enter the one place I thought I could not stand—politics."

Even with her perseverance in politics, isn't she apprehensive that she will be going up against people her father's age? She quickly replies, "Being young is an advantage. It can give the impression that you are still motivated, committed and encouraged."

Indeed, her fellow youth may provide a key role in her election. In fact, one of her plans should she get elected is to enact ordinances providing venues that would wean them away from drugs.

Aside from this, she intends to sponsor ordinances that would encourage micro-businesses, and establish a one-stop-shop addressing the problems of vigilante killings in their place.



Too young for politics?

Or more of the same old politics?

KENN Pascual Tobias

Not just the general's daughter

Em Aglipay, daughter of Gen. Edgardo Aglipay, believes that the youth should do more than complain

EM AGLIPAY HAS MISS HISTORIS for, among others, a contestant for "Star Search". She once noticed at a radio station to be interviewed and was promptly asked if she was a contestant for the popular talent search program.

The pretty and athletic 24-year-old, however, has a more serious agenda. She dreams "to represent the millions of labor and workers through her party, Democratic Independent Workers' Association (Diwa)."

She had just started a promising career as an attorney when Diwa invited her to run in its first campaign. It was a hard decision, but she says that her desire to make a difference in this country shouldn't be understated.

The choice came as no surprise to the friends of this UP Law graduate. A member of the Ayala Young Leaders Alliance, she served as president of the De La Salle University Student Council, and chairperson of the Union of Catholic Student Councils of the Philippines.

Her peers have long known about her keen interest in labor law, and her enthusiastic participation as a member of Diwa.

She explains, "I find myself complaining about everything I find wrong in our laws, in Philippine politics, and in this country. If I turned my back on the opportunity to do something about those problems, then I lose the right to complain."

But accepting Diwa's nomination would be risking up to the challenge of change." In the words of lawyer Tito Aglipayan, the 69th nominee of Diwa, "you can see in her hope for our country."

Her passion for her cause fuels her to wake up as early as 5 a.m. to travel outside Manila, either by land, by plane, or by Ro-Ro. Since Diwa has to reach voters all over the country, the attitude campaign outlines in every region, and is a regular guest speaker at conventions and youth camps all over the country. She also meets and forms alliances with non-government organizations, such as the National Confederation of Cuticle Drivers and Operators Associations of the Philippines. One of her most memorable experiences while on the campaign trail was when she spoke at a high school graduation in Subic Bagan, Iram. The laughingly promise, "While waiting for the graduates to begin, a family approached me. I thought that they wanted me to take their picture. It turned out they wanted to have their picture taken with me." When she needs guidance, she turns to her mentor, former SBP Chief Gen. Edgardo Aglipay, for guidance.

Should she be elected as party-list representative, she will support a nationwide, across-the-board increase of P125 in the minimum wage, as well as tuition penalties for violations of labor laws. Compensation for naval laborers, fisher folk and farmers are also high on her agenda. Em has been enamored through that she may be too young for this position, where she will be working with colleagues twice her age. Em counters, "It is precisely because of my youth that I am fit for this job. Because of my idealism, I would be willing to accept that we may not be changed just because it's been there for the longest time. I will struggle for what is right even when the system leads us to give up."

AMT

Kenn's campaign kicks off

At just 21 years old, Kenn is ready to parlay his Public Administration degree into a stint as councilor of Sta. Cruz, Laguna

KENN PASCUAL TOBIAS had not yet graduated from college when he filed his candidacy for Councilor of Sta. Cruz, Laguna. At 21 years old, just three years shy of legal age, Kenn is ready to parlay his Public Administration degree into a stint on the Municipal Council.

Laguna Governor Teresita Lazaro was looking for youth duties to fill up the Liderato-CMD slate when someone pestered Kenn's resume. Impressed by his stints in the UP Bilisan/Barangay Student Council and in UP Cores-El Bulungan, he was promptly recruited. It was a fortuitous event, as Kenn had always dreamed of becoming a public official even as early as his junior years in high school. With this goal in mind, he joined the Lazaro Leadership Foundation, an organization of youth leaders in Laguna. He also co-pursued studies in Public Administration at UP Diliman. So determined were his Chat he had personally pursued his studies as an independent candidate, even if the two opposing candidates for Mayor of Sta. Cruz are both his uncles.

Campaigning, he says, has been quite hectic. Every morning, he gets treated the houses in his town, together with several volunteers who distribute his leaflets and sample ballots. He attends barangay caucuses at night and regularly waits by streets to commonly leaflets asking for their support. Even ordinary folk are pitching in. During a psychosocial talk he ran out of 20 pens bills to buy personal votes. Unfortunately, all his volunteers were also empty-handed that day. A joint resident in the crowd volunteered his problems and offered endorsements, for free.

It is, after all, for Kenn that he runs. His plans to promote agriculture as a source of livelihood for Lazi Constituents, and to establish a hard-working institute named for the late economist and driver. As a fresh graduate himself, he also wants to promote college scholarships for the deserving. According to him, while Sta. Cruz is the capital of Laguna, it has long been overtaken by its more developed neighbors. To place his town at par with Laguna's developed cities, it must be a bit flexible.

In a country where every candidate is using the same things, Kenn's learning and confidence is refreshing. When asked about his interests aside from his duties as a student and mayor, he quickly pipes up, "I am still an eligible bachelor so I need to look for my lifer light." With his hospitable love for his town and his enthusiasm for life, Sailing that special someone should be the least of his concerns.

GRT

Makati's genuine choice?

The unassuming and soft-spoken Erwin Gemuino steps up to the challenge of representing Makati

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD ERWIN Gemuino has a lot on his plate. To run for congressman of the 2nd district of Makati, the young businessman and financial analyst, would be enough to daunt the most seasoned politician. Yet the unassuming and soft-spoken Erwin is relentless.

Everyday, he does the rounds of houses, speeches before NGOs or youth groups, and interviews with the press.

At 9 a.m., he gets up on stage for daily barangay rallies which last until the wee hours of the morning. This is aside from his duties as vice president for legal affairs of the Tesco Group of Companies, and his weekly schedule in Tiaoci. (Jody Mico Marcelo, inset)

So far, his efforts seem to be paying off. He shares that during their rallies, the audience doesn't patronize even if it's rainy. He adds, "When I go into a house filled with my opponent's supporters on the inside, I display posters and pinpointed in the living rooms, bedrooms and bathrooms. It's really front-running."

Aside from his efforts in campaigning, Erwin credits the recent turnout to his work in the Workers' Assistance Desk, which has since evolved into a group called "Bayang Isa Alliance of individuals and organizations, composed of 16 barangays to provide assistance to livelihood projects, livelihood training seminars and feeding programs.

Aside from his brother initiative who was running for councilor of the 1st District of Makati, there are no other politicians in his family. To help him plot his strategy, he has assembled campaign managers, some of whom used to work with his opponents.

If elected, his legal Management degree from Ateneo and his law degree from UP would work to his advantage. He intends to file bills that would provide further benefits to solo parents, as well as to military personnel. He also plans to allocate funds for a massive low cost housing project and for free to drug medication.

But of all these plans, you might wonder if he has room for a typical scenario. He has been quoted saying that he is a "simple man" who may by his side when he filed his Certificate of Candidacy. "We're friends. Like me, she's into charity work in the helps me out what she can."

What Erwin is very explicit about though, is his vision for his district. "When people think of Makati, they think of Ayala, Rufino, Intramuros, etc. Most people are not aware of Pembo, Bitid, Comembo and the other barangays that remain steeped in poverty. right beside the financial center of the country." He stresses that his focus dubbed as tourism and gamblers because a politician, he is understood. "Makati is a challenge to any ambitious politician who wants the best, more so as a political neophyte. But as I like to say, 'Young makes, makes growing.'"

AMT

Kris Ablan's weighty inheritance

I am not the next Roque Ablan, Jr.; I am the first Kris Ablan'

FOR BRILLIANCE, POLITICS RUNS IN THE BLOOD. His father is Congressman Roque Ablan, Jr. His grandfather the late Roque Ablan, Sr. was once governor of Davao Norte. Now, at 29 years old, he is making his first foray into local politics with his candidacy for Provincial Board member of the first district of Davao Norte under Lakas-CMD.

His political pedigree seems to serve him well. Once, while climbing hands with an old lady in a remote town, he was taken aback when she suddenly started crying and hugging him. Tearfully, she recounted that his grandmother, the late Honorata Ablan, had helped her before. These days, his father, who is also the Provincial Chair of his political party, is monitoring and watching him the manners of campaigning.

Yet, as he says, he has enough experience that could match any other candidate's. A legal Management graduate of Ateneo de Manila University, he has representative of the Ateneo Kanggunian. He even ran to win as chair of the UP Diliman Student Council, defying initial expectations that he would lose out to the candidates of the three powerful, student political party. While finishing his law studies at UP, he worked with his father in lobbying for various bills in Congress. Recently, before he filed his candidacy, he served as an executive assistant at the Office of the Solicitor General.

Meetings usually find him having breakfast conversations in the early morning. When he does not have a speaking engagement or a LAKAS-CMD campaign rally, he makes the rounds of houses and public markets. "I've also started to listen with my volunteers, my neighbors and my nurses after my speech to certain political issues to other concerns people," he explains. During these rallies, he shares his plans to seek funding to improve benefits to teachers and to encourage Overseas Filipino workers to set up businesses in the province. He also intends to facilitate the construction of the Davao Norte International Convention Center and Hotel. True to his law background, he will propose the establishment of arbitration as a standard solution in settling disputes. He calls his province "an unpolished gem," so it will be a lot to offer aside from the famous fruits, tourist spots, and beaches.

Does he think that his youth is an advantage? Without skipping a beat, Kris answers, "Kung ang 'edad' ang basis natin para sa isang tao, hindi 'natin sya dapat iboto." (The look of young). On the one hand, it's a good factor because people are drawn to me and I can immediately converse with them. But I can't look young that I am already a lawyer. On the other hand, some people get skeptical. I have to remind them that I just look young but I am very well qualified and of age and experience." Certainly, it is an experience honed in part by growing up under the tutelage of his governor's public relations. Yet while he is grateful for their guidance, he insists indeed and then adds, "I am not now the next Roque Ablan Jr.. I am the first Kris Ablan."

KRIS Ablan with Davao Norte Governor Pantaleon "Boy Boy" Alvarez, Jr.

AMT

Bohol's new face?

'I want to serve my district since I have seen how much difference a public servant can make,' says Adam Jala

AFTER HARDLY DRAGGING THE BAR exam last year, Adam Jala, 27, is set for another challenge—running for representative of the 3rd District of Bohol under Lakas-CMD.

Although he is the youngest in his numbers representative, he is not exempted from having to court votes. He goes to round all 493 corner of his district, talking to local leaders and speaking to rallies. He has also been given a crash course on how to say his first public speaking engagement where he had to speak to hundreds of people in straight Visayan language.

Why run as representative when he could start with, say councilor? Adam readily answers, "I want to serve my district since I have seen how much difference a public servant can make. Be is elected only locally, yet he is tasked to create laws for the country. This is a position that needs both local and national perspective."

His law degree from Ateneo de Manila University, as well as his familiarity with the problems of his district, would also come in handy. He says that he would rather run for office while still young, as he believes that his youth is an advantage.

"Youth means idealism. The intention for pursuing public service is pure and unstained, and not motivated by the desire for gain. The drive is public service, not politics."

He brushes aside criticisms that since he is young, he is inexperienced and irresponsible. If younger candidates start to doubt their own capabilities, he argues, they would create a self-fulfilling prophecy. He revealed with his mother in lobbying for various bills in Congress. Recently, before he filed his candidacy, he served as an executive assistant at the Office of the Solicitor General.

Meetings usually find him having breakfast conversations in the early morning. When he does not have a speaking engagement or a LAKAS-CMD campaign rally, he makes the rounds of houses and public markets. "I've also started to listen with my volunteers, my neighbors and my nurses after my speech to certain political issues to other concerns people," he explains. During these rallies, he shares his plans to seek

How they fared in the elections

Win some, lose some

1) Kris Ablan

Kris won as provincial board member of Davao Norte. For him, the challenge now was the longest day of his life. Looking back, Kris recently told Inquirer.net: "I started to cry immediately and continued to cry for a few hours. I guess I was overwhelmed." Kris's father, current mayor Pantaleon was told Kris's victory during the last election.

2) Erwin Gemuino

Unfortunately, Erwin failed in his battle to become the congressman of the second district of Makati. But in the course, he demonstrated he did better than his cousins would show—and that he has had more about developed working a first experience.

3) May May Marcial

May May was re-councilor of Ogbo City. Davao del Sur. She is honored by the incumbent governor by her two cousins, and is considered as the father's legacy of public service. She is there are also a councilor and his death three years ago.

4) Kenn Tobias

Kenn Tobias failed to bag a seat in the Sta. Cruz town council of Laguna. But here thanked for the experience in campaigning running and the opportunity to lead a team still at his people.

5) Em Aglipay

Em almost things are looking tough for the Democratic Independent Worker's Association (Diwa). The party-list candidate After tallying in election day, Em said she proceeded to District office to decide on poll watching. She said Diwa would have run a more solid campaign. It was the party-list group's first foray in the party-list election.

6) Adam Jala

Adam failed in his congressional bid in the third district of Bohol. He succeeds his father

2BU! REVIEW

Wireless and loving it

TP-LINK

Don't let cables cramp your Internet surfing style. You can turn your own home into a Wifi hotspot

By Pam Pastor

I USED TO SLEEP UNDER A TANGLED mess of wires. My laptop's power adaptor, Internet cable, camera and mobile phone data gets, connects USB cable. iPod's USB cable and earphones make up my very own labyrinth.

So much for a cord-strewn lifestyle.

To make things worse, for a long time my cable connection was constantly spotty, no thanks to my faulty cable. Our moving move and my connecting would die, cutting off all supposed YM conversations and killing summer blogging sessions.

I was frustrated to the extend to our place. My laptop debuted its purpose, parking it on my lap was a sure way to send my Internet happy home. There was even a time I crashed on the couch for days because there was the only place he cable could reach.

Back then, the aching back and hollow sleep seemed worthy sacrifices for this incredible Internet junkie. It didn't even matter that people would walk into the living room to spot me, pajama-clad and sprawled on the couch, dozing up with my mouth open.

But I haven't sweated lately and as I called my tech-savvy friends. They had two words for me: wireless modem.

I soon learned that these little machines can turn your home into a Wifi hotspot, so long as you have a DSL or cable connection. And the great part is they don't cost a lot when you think of what they can do. They're normally sold for P2,150-P2,750.

TP-Link, a huge manufacturer of home networking products in China, has been bringing in wireless routers and other networking devices to the country in its attempt to capture the global market. Its products, which have been creeping outside for quality, price and design, are available through many distributors around the country.

I turned one of its routers (the best-selling WR340G) and was overwhelming in the glory of having wireless connection at home. Things became a lot easier, and multitasking a breeze. I was able to watch videos on YouTube while drying my hair pick in the kitchen and check my e-mail while drying my hair.

Mobility isn't just the big payoff. Having a wireless connection at home allows several computers to access the connection at the same time.

It worked really well for me since my sister was rocking her new laptop and discovering the wonders of YM and its many enablers. Our three computers to the house were all able to go online simultaneously—even the desktop, thanks to the USB adapter.

That meant my brother and I could send YouTube links to each other even if he was just in another room.

And if you are tech-savvy enough to know the ins and outs of MyExpose and Freewire to but not-so-savvy enough to mess with configurations and settings, TP-Link offers tech support to make life a little easier.

Because each home setup is unique, the distributors can also offer assistance in determining which products you would need to build your own Wi-Fi zone. Just make sure your neighbor isn't stealing your connection.

Now I still sleep beside a tangled mess of wires—but minus one. Thanks to the magic of wireless internet, I can keep an eye on my iPod while I comment on board even while lulling sideways like that I introduce. Really.

For more info, call 7261798 or visit www.tp-link.com.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

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At Pizzeria Toscana, every dish is a labor of love

A taste of Tuscany in Manila

By Maal N. Reyes
PEP Correspondent

CHEF ANGEL ARAE WAS SUMBUNGHOG. Some customers had just told her they found out about her restaurant, which has been open for only three months, from a blog.

Stunned but enthused, Arae ran over to her 9-year-old son and asked, "What's a blog?"

Such is the story many patrons of Pizzeria Toscana tell the owners. While a bit hidden by a condo cluster in a side street in Manila, this quaint and homey eatery has become a favorite haunt of bloggers and foodies.

The brainchild of Arae and her partner, Antonio Portugue, Pizzeria Toscana was the result of the culinary careers the two had taken in Amici de Cene Roma.

They had begun by cooking only for friends and family until a commercial unit turned PC storerooms near their homes became savory dogma having day jobs (Portugue is a business director for sales at a well known bank, while Arae is a graduate of San Beda) and to experience in the restaurant business, the two jumped at the chance to fulfill a dream.

"We told ourselves that if someone else puts up a restaurant there, we'll never forgive ourselves," Portugue said. "So we were elated and opened up our own."

Food and family

Restaurateur, as Portugue put it, is essentially about family. So the roots is transposed to true family fashion: Portugue and Arae themselves do the cooking. The former specializing in pizza and most dishes and the latter pasta and desserts. Everything on the menu is indeed a labor of love.

The same close knit vibe suffuses the small 30-seater restaurant. Family members painted the walls and refurbished second-hand chairs, and photos of the makeover process adorn the walls. There are also framed 3x4 parent shots of celebrities eating or cooking pasta—Richard Gere, John Wayne, even Sophia Loren.

Despite never having been to Tuscany, Portugue and Arae decided on this specific type of cuisine because they were challenged by the creativity it entailed.

"Tuscan has a lot of mountainous areas, so the people make do with what's available. I like that because you're forced to be innovative," Portugue said.

And it shows in their dishes. The menu has the usual staples (Pomodoro pasta, P170, Chicken Lafonte, P270, Pepperoni pizza, P395), but there are options children as well.

These include Bruschetta pizza (P290), topped with mozzarella, tomatoes, artichokes, and scrambled quail eggs. The Salsa di Noccini pasta (P150) is a spicy dish of smoked sausages, Italian mushrooms, and fennel seeds in tomato sauce. The lasagna Pasta Polpettes (P170) has generous helpings of meatballs, and is a must in itself.

The couple's creativity is most evident in the menu's assorted specials. For June, it's Rosalia Pizza (P270), a surprisingly tasty dish with cod fish toppings. The idea for June's offering came about when a Japanese customer kept asking if Pizzeria Toscana had cod fish pizzas. Since they already had fish on their menu (Barolla alla Livornese, P280), the couple decided to create a pizza for the customer, and Rosalia Pizza was born.

"Probably one of the reasons people keep coming back is because we're pretty generous with our toppings," Portugue said.

Busy schedules

Pizzeria Toscana hopes to expand in business, but hours a single hour via "family" touch as it is. Portugue and Abad find themselves rushing home from work to operate the restaurant. The resto is open only from 6:30-10 p.m., Mondays to Saturdays.

With such busy schedules, Portugue said that even expansion there would do within the next few months would be "to be open for lunch on weekends."

But neither of them is complaining. As Portugue put it, cooking is therapeutic for him, and he doesn't see the restaurant as a job.

"Some people like to go to the bars or play billiards after work, like, I cook pizza."

So far Arae, the other baker fellas blueberry cheesecakes in her spare time.

It's quite rare for anyone to fulfill his or her dreams and get paid for it. So Arae and Portugue, Pizzeria Toscana is doing just that.

The only downside is, "Our friends are very happy for us, but they're also quite sad because we don't have the time to cook for them anymore!" said Abad.

Pizzeria Toscana is at G/F Iberville Condominium, 1 de Castilla corner Valencia Streets, New Manila. Call 411-0106 or 09175220546 or e-mail Toscana.pizzeria@yahoo.ci. They deliver within the vicinity of Valencia Hills, Dilimon Heights, Barkin Hills, Garden Island Condoville, and Granada Street.

YUMMY Rosalia Pizza

PACE-setjuana loving smiles dot the walls.

ENTERTAINMENT

Lyle Lenie G. Velarde

INSIDE
- Mission 'Impostora' Sneak Peek /E4
- Who's scared of horror movies? /G1

Johnny Depp, 'Pirates' bag popcorn prize at MTV Movie Awards

A MUSICAL pal for Rihanna's show

JOHNNY Depp, best performance award for "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest"

Will Ferrell (left) and Sasha Baron Cohen, host, in "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby"

CAMERON Diaz's MTV Awards moment as presenter of the MTV Generation Award

WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning June 1

Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End
Walt Disney Pictures

TW	LW	Title	Gross	WK
1	1	Pirates of the Caribbean	$43.2 mln	2
2		Knocked Up	$29.2 mln	1
3	2	Shrek the Third	$26.7 mln	3
4		Mr. Brooks	$10.5 mln	1
5	3	Spider-Man 3	$7.5 mln	5
6	5	Waitress	$2.3 mln	6
7		Gracie	$1.4 mln	1
8	4	Bug	$1.2 mln	2
9	6	28 Weeks Later	$1.2 mln	4
10	7	Disturbia	$1.1 mln	9

This Week Last Week Movie in Release

New release

Based on studio estimates compiled on Sunday

REUTERS

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MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

PHOTOS (right) A shaven-to-the-bare-skull of EGAP with her mother Kathy Hilton in this frame grab from TMZ.com video, as the arrival at the Men's Central Jail Central Booking in downtown LA. AP/TMZ

Paris Hilton pops surprise at MTV Awards

UNIVERSAL CITY, CALIFORNIA—PARIS Hilton expressed fear about her upcoming jail sentence while making a surprise visit to the MTV Movie Awards, saying she was "scared" but ready to do the time.

"I am trying to be strong right now," said Hilton, who wore a black strapless dress and jewels to the event. Before she stepped briefly in pose for photos and speak to reporters.

The hotel heiress, ordered to report to jail by Tuesday for violating her probation in an alcohol-related reckless driving case, said her family, friends and lawyer have helped her prepare for her nearly three-week sentence behind bars.

"I've received thousands of letters from around the world of support and it's been super-related and really helped me," she said. "I did have a choice to go to a pay jail. But I declined because I feel like the media portrays me in a way that I'm not. That's why I wanted to go to county, to show that I can do it and I'm going to be treated like everyone else. I'm going to do the time. I'm going to do it the right way."

While Hilton was sentenced May 4, Superior Court Judge Michael T. Sauer ruled that she would not be allowed any work release, house arrest or an alternative jail or electronic monitoring in lieu of jail.

Though a judge sentenced her to 45 days behind bars, Hilton is expected to serve only 23 days because of a state law that requires double sentences for good behavior.

Hilton said the jail sentence had benefited in effect.

"Even these past couple weeks, it's completely changed my life," she said. "It's in the light. It's a way I can turn it in a positive way and when I come out, I can't wait to start my new life and be even stronger than I am now."

Johnny Depp, 'Pirates' bag ...

The heiress, who made repeat to Los Angeles County Jail by mistaking Sunday, created a commotion when she arrived on the ruby carpet outside the auditorium. Wearing a ruffled black dress and dazzling jewels, she flashed her trademark coy smile as she posed for photos and talked with reporters.

"I'm really scared but I'm ready to face my sentence," she said. "Even though this is a really hard time, I have my family, my friends and my fans to support me, and that's really helpful."

Host Sarah Silverman cracked a couple jokes as Hilton's response to open the show. When the camera panned to Hilton, she was not smiling.

There she host turned to Hilton's irreverent mix of humor in shaken jokes for best fight and best villain, plus awards for aspiring filmmakers.

Jack Nicholson was the winning villain, capturing the Golden Popcorn trophy for his indecent role in "The Departed." The fight prize went to Emmel Bratt, who fainted "The Ultimate Fighter" in the epic "300."

The British-brought performance pilot went to 9-year-old Jaden Smith, who starred opposite his father, Will Smith, in "The Pursuit of Happyness." He

MIKE Myers, MTV Generation Awardee AP/PHOTO

JACK Nicholson, best villain in "The Departed" AP/PHOTO

BRUCE Willis (left) chats with John Travolta backstage. AP

GERARD Butler, best fight for "300" Photograph F1

JACKIE Bernardo Cohen, best villain in "Borat" AP/PHOTO

accepted for award by video from Toronto with his shirt by his side and his mom behind the camera.

The two-hour program was punctuated by musical performances. Rihanna and Jay-Z paired up on her new song, "Umbrella," and and songstress Amy Winehouse sang her megahit "Rehab."

The 16-year-old awards show unveiled two new categories Sunday: best movie spoof and best summer movie you haven't seen yet. Both trophies went to Frat Pack comedies, with "Scary Movie" for "United 306," a hybrid spoof of "300" and "United 93."

"Transformers," due July 3, was named the best as-yet-unseen summer film.

MTV viewers voted by telephone, text message and Internet to choose the winners in all categories.

SARAH Silverman hosts the show. AP/PHOTO

'Blood Diamond'

"BLOOD DIAMOND," 8/5 rpts that takes viewers on a journey through harsh but beautiful West Africa, is now available on a two-disc special edition widescreen format. Warner Home Video.

The film stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Djimon Hounsou and Jennifer Connelly.

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Edward Zwick, a tells of the human cost of the diamond trade in war-torn Sierra Leone.

'Sublime'

"Sublime," starring Tom Cavanagh, Kelly Brook

BLOOD DIAMOND

NOW ON DISC

'Desperation'

Stephen King's "Desperation," which was originally set into film by director Mick Garris, is now on video in DVD format.

In the thriller, King delivers much or nine of four ventured suspense in a story about a group of strangers who become reluctant heroes while battling to bring down an unrestrained evil.

Ben Perlman, Tom Skerritt, Steven Weber, Charles Durning, Annabeth Gish and Ron Thomas star.

Park, Lawrence Gilliam Jones and Katherine Cunningham Gray, is now on disc courtesy of Warner Home Video.

A modern day horror tale

The president is a tough but vulnerable lady

THE WORLD HAS A NEW IRONE "Commander in Chief," that gives a new spin to the "president-in-crisis" format. Geena Davis' top by "The West Wing": This time, the US president is a woman (played by Geena Davis).

Telecast at 2 p.m. on Sundays, the drama-series manages to hold its own when compared to "The West Wing," because it scrupulously avoids imitating the older series and strives to make it on its own.

In many ways unlike the US president suddenly passes away, and her female vice-president is thrust into the corners of power with no clue to catch her breath.

She plays it by ear, but is pretty enough to keep her steamed and remind all sorts of pressure to nominate a well-placed vice president who isn't her presumed rivals.

Problems abound

That takes a lot of doing, because her own husband can't resist whispering the occasional word of counsel into her ear, even when it's not wanted. The fact that he could become corrupt problem for the presidential couple, and could even affect their marriage.

Other problems abound. Politically, Donald Sutherland (also an ex-president) frequently who wants to make sure that the new US president doesn't succeed.

So from a prisoner's name to nobody he makes it seem like the president has already decided for him.

But she still refuses to follow his lead, and makes that a feature for of her, a general who is also a clever political player, because her true president—despite his great reluctance to accept the "President" job.

Personally, the president also has many problems, since the members of her family refuse to advance their party agendas to her and the nation's more over-arching priorities.

An instance, her teenage daughter loses her cell-all dairy and the FBI is afraid that, if it falls into the wrong hands, it could gravely embarrass the president. Thank goodness, the ball is lanced before it can become a major problem—but other worries and intrigues soon take its place.

As the ironic name of all of these problems and questions is the president herself, and Geena Davis is charged with the major (major) obligation to make her character as well-rounded that she can convincingly and empathetically handle the wide range of concerns that accost her from day to week-Friday.

It is a tribute to Davis' developed range as a performer that she's able to do this with a unique combination of character-trait vulnerability.

The authority makes her truly "presidential," and the vulnerability saves the series from ending up as a ragged dramatized documentary of the US president's official and personal lives.

Trouble is, the series focuses so much on the president that most other characters fade into the background. We trust that, as the series unfolds, its focus won't be quite as rigorous, so that the full panoply of its real office drama can truly unfold.

Is Hillary Clinton watching? Is Gloria Arroyo? Hmm, maybe they could coach Geena Davis a thing or two!

'MJB'

Natasha Bedingfield's second album, "M.J.B.," features songs that unquestionably explore varying stages of love.

With a 60s, 1 single to America, a 50s, 1 UK debut album, and over 20 million units sold worldwide, Bedingfield is the UK's biggest female pop star.

Her latest album features a stellar team of guest artists—Mike Elizondo, Adam Anders, Greg Wattenberg, Andrew Frampton and longtime Mediaone collaborator Ric Lenhard. The first cut to be taken from "M.J.B." is the forthcoming single, "I Wanna Have Your Babies."

Katharine McPhee

"American Idol" runner-up Katharine McPhee recently released her much-anticipated debut album, which garnered rave reviews. The collection of pop, dance and R&B tunes features that hit country single Varee Is." McPhee is currently follow it up with her second single, "Love Story."

"PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3: At World's End"

Finally, an ending

By Oliver Mr. Palamiyam
Contributor

IT'S STILL TOO LONG, BUT "PIRATES OF THE Caribbean 3: At World's End" finally ties up a number of loose ends. Somerset finally at times, bringing an end to the complicated saga of Captain Jack Sparrow and his treasure-seeking.

The popular and profitable series of pop-com flicks hasn't always been smooth sailing, as each of the blockbusters could have (it) less confusion—and easier to comprehend—if unnecessary parts had been edited out.

The Gore Verbinski-directed "Pirates 2" picks up from the last sequel's cliffhanger ending, but its has pro-rata still get affected by its length.

Its main characters aren't particularly memorable for pathos or uniqueness, with the exception of Jack Sparrow, played by Johnny Depp. Sadly, appearing in a formally planned franchise like this one never down even the most lovable of quirky mistakes.

Plot: so funny

This time around, Jack isn't as naturally funny, or as appealingly eccentric as he was in "Pirates" part. The time is ticking then to say this character as one already, even when he has got resurrected.

But that the others didn't have anything to do. Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley) and Will Turner (Orlando Bloom) figure in one melee after another, busy maneuvering with pirates upon pirates, joining in treacherous alliances and double-crossing would be allies for one reason or another. Sometimes, the details get lost, and feel like fillers between the entertainment plot points.

REVIEW

Too long

The viewers sees what he's come to expect, although it takes a full two hours before a big, satisfying showdown takes place. We learn the secret Pirate Lords, including the newly crowned Elizabeth Jones soon inherits the lordship and the pirate fleet from the plot device turned Jim Peng! Ending off against their opponents at last, after a heart-pumping reward awaiting that displayed some "honor among thieves" code.

At least it is able to address the lately brought up romance angle between Will and Elizabeth, who finally tie the knot publicly as the flurry of locks, unsanctioned and exploding events. It doesn't make proper use as much of Jack Sparrow, alive and lacking agony, but his cameo is also one of the movie's highlights.

The touching scene after the end credits is one of the few things the viewer would discreetly remember from this part. Apart from viewers and a little drunken fun, there's little else to make the film worth remembering.

Social responsibility?

From Ed Ballesteros (ed.ballesteros@yahoo.com) 726 Market St., San Francisco, CA

About Miss Nora Aunor starring another woman in Las Vegas: The state of beauty does not allow same-sex marriage—only bisexuals, lesbians, New Jersey and Massachusetts do, and some cities like San Francisco, New York and Miami.

FEEDBACK

Just to clarify

From Duke Davis (dukedavis@yahoo.com) 726 Market St., San Francisco, CA

About Miss Nora Aunor starring another woman in Las Vegas: The state of beauty does not allow same-sex marriage—only bisexuals, lesbians, New Jersey and Massachusetts do, and some cities like San Francisco, New York and Miami.

the communities representing their so-called marker niche and ask the children, girls in particular, about movements they innocently accept as dance steps. So much for corporate social responsibility.

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A TERRIFIED Sophia dolls up reporter Cherrie Pooles

SUNSHINE applies mascara on her own.

On the set of the Kapuso network's new prime time drama

SNEAK PEEK

ALFRED Ice and Mark Anthony strike for the camera.

Mission 'Impostora,' not impossible

By Rayani San Diego jr.
Photos by Regan de la Cruz

"IT'S SCARY, ARE IN A STATE OF FLUX.

While filmmakers seem to have lost their horror touchstone (Asians shower Yanis made a comeback in the form of aswangans and amomalians—at remakes of 1970s and 1980s movies like "Babaknang" and "Bitoing Walang Magsing."

Director Mario J. de los Reyes observed: "With the success of 'Babaknang,' I think people are more partial to strength drama now."

MARK Anthony Fernandez, Ice Seguerra and Alfred Vargas in a scene from "Impostora."

"SEEING we're kinda together" Ice Sia, (right) of her fandom with Sunshine

De los Reyes, who recently snagged movie-directorial assignments for ABS-CBN ("Mga Anghel na Walang Langit" and "Valla Life"), is returning to the genre with GMA 7's new prime time soap opera "Impostora," which debuted on Monday.

"Although it's an original story by RJ Nuevas, this soap has a formula touch," De los Reyes explained. "It's a lot like a Mexican telenovela with its twists and turns. There's deception and intrigue. It requires suspension of disbelief."

The soap tells the story of conjoined twins (played by Sid twins Charlotte and Christine Bermudez as kids and by Ina Calzado and Ina Alvarez as adults). As kids, they are separated, but a brutal crime results in fatal disfigurement for one of the sisters. With the magic of plastic surgery, however, the other twin assumes a different persona (Geraldine Dizon).

Rounds incredible, a cross between "Kamkal Tabo" and "Bitoin na Bituka?"

Calzado admitted that the new soap "has fantastic elements. It stretches reality a bit, but it's not totally unbelievable."

Co-star Luis Alandy hoped that viewers would find the new soap "entertaining."

"That's our goal—to make an enjoyable series," De los Reyes concluded.

Leading man Alfred Vargas pointed out: "I expect it to be an endearing show in the mold of 'Babaknang,' which captured the hearts of many Pinoys."

On the first few days of taping, Ice Seguerra commented that she wasn't "excited yet."

"I've been very demanding. I want them to take acting seriously." All the stars have been working hard. De los Reyes noted—particularly, Mark Anthony Fernandez, Dizon's partner on the soap.

BETWEEN duels, Sunshine tosses away shoes; Mark Anthony reads a book and Ice makes a quick call, above left; and Alfred catches a few Zs, above right.

"He has dedicated. He has depth," Ice drawer said of Fernandez, whom he had last worked with in the teenaged flick "Kahilan Kitaan ni Gala" in 1996. "He's very conscientious about his work. He really sat every on of us to ask about his performance."

Another reunited team is the Glenn Calzado partnership, which was put to the test in past hapless shows "Kung Mawawala Ka" and "Encantadia."

"We've known each other since we were kids," Glenn recalled.

"We came out in a TV special together. In first time, I wasn't in show biz. Still-time yet," Calzado said. "As a co-star, Sunshine has been supportive and generous from the start."

"We work well together," Glenn asserted, dismissing rumors of on-set set fights.

But true, Calzado said of the intrigues "Impostora" is built as a team."

ENTERTAINMENT

'Tiyanak' lead star no fan of scary movies

By Marinel B. Cruz

ACTRESS RICA PERALEJO, AN EXCLUSIVE talent of ABS-CBN, admits she had been skeptical of her co-stars in the Tagpi movie, "Tiyanak," especially those coming from that network, GMA-7.

During the first shooting days, she claims she was consciously looking for faults in them.

"In fairness, wala talaga. They were all stars," Rica tells members of the press in a gathering on Sunday.

Rica heads the cast of The Mark Reyes-Isaiah Mendoza-Yllana Movie Circle, which also features Mark Reyes, Jessy Mendoza and JC de Vera—all ABS-CBN home talents-cum-stars.

"They are all very professional. I guess you

TODAY 31

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OPENING TODAY

Ang Daan Patungong Kalimutang

Stars: Sherwin Ordiales, Analyn Bangal Jr.
Directed by Mes de Guzman

Two children of the Batdanes ay labis na-enver long, vanishing roads and steep and slip-pery mountain paths, to reach their school, 15 kilometers from their destitute barrio. This digital fantasy-were a slew of awards here and abroad: It has Best Director and Production Designs; Golden Screen Best Digital Movie and Sound; and Short Director Prize/Special Mention at the 54th San Sebastián Film Festival in Spain. The second place winner in the local digital competition of the Cinemanila film fest two years ago, it was also shown at the 7th Jeonju Filmfestival in Korea. Indy Ilo-cinema by Orchestra Robinsons Orchestra.

Silip

Stars: Diana Zubiri, Polo Ravales, Francine Prieto
Directed by Joel Lamangan

A woman (Zubiri) is brought by her hus-band (Ravales) to an isolated village. When a mysterious stranger (Prieto) joins them in their home, the wife's loneliness and jealousy push her over the edge. Indie Pinoy producer Robin Tan says that he has long wanted to do a movie "similar to the Chinese film, Ju Dou." Based on an "an intriguing true-life story," this "psychological drama" is "the fourth in a series of movies/movies that delves into a woman's psyche," Lamangan relates. "It follows 'Hotel,' 'Hubog' and 'Silib.'" Scripted by Raquel Villavicencio. Jim "Iori/Boy Ama-lio" was shot entirely in Bangalon, Nueva Ecija, last summer.

Ocean's Thirteen

Stars: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Da-mon, Andy Garcia, Al Pacino, Elliot Gould
Directed by Steven Soderbergh

In its third outing, Ocean's gang wages a heist in the name of friendship. A Vegas bil-lionaire (Gould) is driven to a heart attack after a powder-magul (Declan) takes over his beloved hotel. It's now up to the boys to celebrate their ailing pal. Screened out of com-petition at the Cannes, this "spirited and engaging" romp "recaptures much of the spirit of the origi-nal," according to Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Re-porter. Todd McCarthy of Variety observes: "As smooth as a good tuxedo, as stylish as an Armani suit and as reassuring-ful ... as yesterday's Vegas betting odds." Richard Corliss of Time disagrees: "This time, it's mechanical ... [It's] as listless and logy."

CONTINUED 4A

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THEATER MAP

PROMENADE

1 OCEAN'S 13

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JOEL C. LAMANGAN

Opening Today

From page G1

Meet the Robinsons

With the voices of Angela Bassett, Tom Selleck, Adam West, Laurie Metcalf

Directed by Stephen Anderson

Based on the book "A Day With Wilbur Robinson" by William Joyce, this animated flick tells the story of a "weird orphan" who travels in the future, to search of his biological mom. Instead, he is taken in by a family of inventors. Ella Taylor of LA Weekly comments that it boasts "computer generated ingenuity and strong story line." Michael Wilmington of Chicago Tribune calls it "a goofy, gadget-jacked science-fiction comedy ... a real old-mod breakthrough." Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly completes that "there's a frantic ... attention-shortening disorder (to this movie). It's one bumpy ride."

Bordertown

Stars Jennifer Lopez, Antonio Banderas, Kate del Castillo, John Sterman

Directed by Gregory Nava

Inspired by real unsolved crimes against women in a seedy Mexican town near Texas. Our gritty drama thrusts a female reporter (Lopez) in the middle of an explosive murder investigation. This movie was reportedly granted with "scattered boos" at this year's Berlin film fest. Cinemaretal.com points out that the "story definitely has its standard and predictable Hollywood spin." Steve Ian of Boxofficeprophets agrees "it clichéd ridden ... a tirade to unethical grim realities ... to the point of entertainment." Leslie Felperin dismisses it as "only fair to poor." Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter notes: "HBO replete with plot holes."

'Tiyanak' lead star ...

From page G1

Gimenez work in some has become a plus factor for them; debuts stir up mahusay," Bea points out.

Also included in the "Tiyanak" cast are Lester de Leon, Jil Vale, Alwyn Uytingco, TJ Trinidad, Noah Aquas, Rikki Orta Cruz and Andrei Felix.

Commenting the Aquas actors, Aico says she is most impressed with Ryan.

"He's a thinking comedian. He's very witty," she screams. "Really, there's no such thing as he rules for good actors."

Horror films

For an actress who has done six horror films—"Spirit of the Glass," "Taboo Ito Sa Unang," "Kulach," "Kanila," "Multo sa" and now "Tiyanak"—Aico claims she is not a fan of scary movies.

"I get nervous really," she admits. "I scream inside the theater. That's why my friends are ashamed of me. But if I were to choose a favorite movie, it has to be "The Sixth Sense." I like its treatment. It has many of the scenes, ing we always see in films of the same genre. I like the fact that Haley Joel Osmond, the 1999 child Bruce Willis "The Sight of the Living Dead" a topic. "I also like the first of the 'Blades, Razor and Ball' series. It paved the way for the production of many more horror movies here," he shares.

Black considers horror flicks more difficult to execute than drama or action. "Special effects is a major concern," he explains. "In horrors, it's very physical—you scream a lot, you runs lot."

According to Black, the new "Tiyanak" is very different from the 1988 version of the same title, with James de Belen in the lead role.

"Although the original is scarier, this version is better in film quality and special effects," he explains.

"Tiyanak" is about newborn babies who transform into monsters capable of devouring humans. The version features the Tiyanak in three forms—those that flicks on land, water and air.

Special effects

Explains visual effects creator Jay Santiago of Riot: "The land Tiyanak looks like wood. The water Tiyanak is shiny and has seaweed-looking hair and the air Tiyanak has wings for its arms."

Also in the special effects team behind TV shows "Captain Barbell," "Encantadia," "Ellerie" and the movie version of "Mulawin."

Santiago says this is the first scary movie to use special effects that are more "detailed" and "flexible" because they are "in 3D."

"This is to be some groundbreaking because we normally use puppets for our creatures," Santiago explains. "Pesoky talaga ang budget."

"Tiyanak" was written by Jaime Ray Newmundo and Benjo Arbiza, with production design by Eric Tendlin and cinematography by Tim Jimenez. The creatures' creators are Raul Horca and Adrian Barcelo. It will premiere in local theaters in July.

The games ...

Front page G1

junior basketball.

Clayton, a second year student of Ateneo de Iloilo College, is making waves in the field of junior tennis.

But, of Xavier School in San Juan, it is junior basketball that is closest to his heart.

"I don't think the kids consider hosting the show as work. They see actually having fun," Manuntag assured.

The program is divided into several segments.

There is "Kamipapa," which talks about what an athlete eats on and off court. "Champ Champ" discusses what an athlete eats if he wants to be a champion.

"In an episode, we interviewed a sports nutritionist about the proper diets. We said what they have athletes do and the nutritionist ... like Gatorade," Manuntag shared.

"We will show the basic tennis racket and explain how it's different from the rest," the said of "Sports Gear," which is about the latest equipment athletes use. "We will also talk about the newest trickies students that show up really fast."

"Kumot Sportsfest" reports on what's happening in various tournaments while "The Coach" is to learn the basics in sports.

"A first on this segment is an interview with Ian Brida Cristopo's junior basketball coach (Edmund) 'Ed' Rodriguez," Manuntag said. "Ito kasi, basketball is a mind game."

"Idol" is a feature on sports legends like Hong Sepiranes, Rivera "Bata" Reyes and Manny Pacquiao.

"Training Ground" is about junior athletes who excel in their sports like 12-year-old international chess master Nico Santos.

"Sports Kids" airs every Saturday (Oct 10:30 a.m. on Studio 23.

'Sesame Street' live

"SESAME Street," which has won the Guinness World Records for the most number of Emmy awards on television, is coming to the Philippines for the first time live.

"Sesame Street Live Presents Elmo's Coloring Book," a musical magical celebration of friendship, learning and fun, marks the world's first travel show ... Elmo, Big Bird, Cookie Monster, Ernie, Bert, Oscar, Grover, Count and many more. The group will perform live on July 19 to 22 at the Aliw Theater, CCP Complex.

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3 OCEAN'S 13	6 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?

PIONEER

1 MEET the ROBINSONS	3 BORDERTOWN
2 OCEAN'S 13	4 PHANO KITA IBIGIN? SILIP

STA. ROSA

1 MEET the ROBINSONS
2 OCEAN'S 13
3 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?
4 SILIP
5 FIREHOUSE DOG / POC 3

LIPA

1 MEET the ROBINSONS
2 WHISPER / POC 3
3 LUCKY YOU
4 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?
5 SILIP

DASMARINAS

1 20 WEEKS LATER
2 MEET the ROBINSONS
3 OCEAN'S 13
4 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?
5 SILIP

ANGELES

1 MEET the ROBINSONS
2 SILIP
3 OCEAN'S 13
4 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?

IMUS

1 OCEAN'S 13
2 MEET the ROBINSONS
3 SILIP
4 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?
5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

STARMILLS

1 WHISPER
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 MEET the ROBINSONS
4 SILIP
5 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?
6 OCEAN'S 13

BACOLOD

1 MEET the ROBINSONS
2 WHISPER / PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN
3 RESERVE
4 OCEAN'S 13
5 SILIP
6 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?

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1 FIREHOUSE DOG
2 MEET the ROBINSONS
3 WHISPER
4 OCEAN'S 13
5 SILIP
6 PHANO KITA IBIGIN?

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CLOCKWISE from top left, Joel Sanchez, Katrina de los Reyes, Ariana Rubido and Chynna Manuel

The games children play

KID FIT

By Harriet R. Cruz

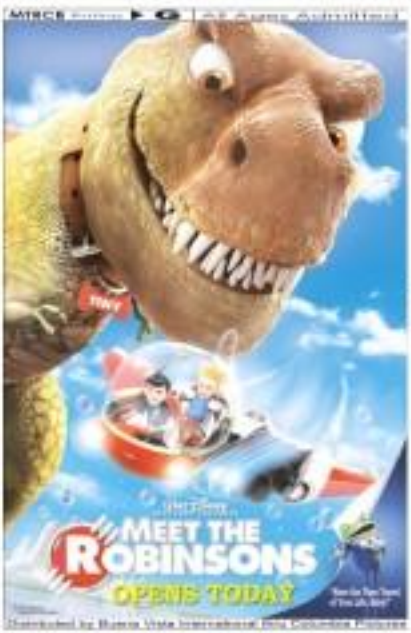
"WE HAVE A LOT OF things to consider when it comes to working with children. First on the list is abiding by the rules of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)," said Sheila Mariscal, who has in her care her two nieces ages 12 to 14.

Mariscal, executive producer of "Sports Kids," is closely working with Jael Jimenez, 12, Chynna Manuel, 14, Ariel Austria, 12 and Kamyo delos Reyes, 14—hosts of the weekly magazine show on Studio 23.

"According to the regulations imposed by the DOLE, we can only work with the kids for four hours a day," Mariscal told Inquirer Kidsweek. "We also have to secure work permits for them."

The DOLE directive prohibits children 15 to work between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., while kids 15, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

"Since our hosts are also into sports, we have to consider the time they allot for schooling, training and competition. TV is actually the last on their list," Mariscal said.

Kamyo, now studying at the Installation International School, is a junior tennis player. Ariel, who is from Ateneo de Manila, is a champion

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